

Revenue (1897), Department.

PRESS SERIES.

G.O., No. 899

Dated 29th October 97

[Despatch Abstract.]

Directing that a conference of
Revenue, Public Works and Medical
officers be held under the Presy. of the
Famine Commr. for the purpose of
discussing certain important questions
that have arisen during the distress
which is now coming to a close.

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Revenue (189) Department.

Order

The Govt. of India
R. & S. D.

No. 2794 7
206-2

Dated 18th August 1897

Received

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Spare copies.

SUBJECT,

Thoring. with remarks
Copy of "Notes on the inspe-
tion of famine relief
works in the Madras Pr.
by Mr. S. Higham, C. I. S.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPER.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Notes on an Inspection of Famine Relief Works in the Madras Presidency, by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., on special duty, Famine Relief Operations.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Province on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. Le Fanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam Districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur Districts.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the District, for Hala-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th, we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur District. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. De Winton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool District, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. De Winton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah District, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah District. After inspecting the Muddanura Tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. De Winton and Mr. Murray leaving us *en route*, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. Le Fanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th *en route* for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shews the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month:—

District.	NUMBER OF WORKS.		ATTENDANCE ON 24TH JUNE.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
TOTAL	111	29	275,634	45,074

The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the distress in these tracts continues, all that is proposed is to open more road works, and I was informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though in the absence of any important works, other than road works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras Famine Code. The gangs were classified as therein directed, and an attempt was made to enforce the standard tasks laid down in the Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue Resolution No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in paragraph 2 of the G. O. quoted above, are to the effect that "all persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C." The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued the following direction:—

"The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well."

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India in their letter No. 226-F., dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposals to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in class C instead of in class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to a B task, and who under the Famine Code should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the G. O. have not been carried out, and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words; all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah Districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one

work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the G. O. already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register shew in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (i) of the G. O. already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking. Thus:—

A man is taken as four units.	
A boy adult	... 3 or 4 units.
A nursing mother	... 1½ "
Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16...	... 2 "
Children under 12	... 1 unit.

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the G. O. of March last. A copy of this G. O. was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the G. O. under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv) of the G. O.), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages

night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the muster of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay, (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works ~~on~~ those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

10. The next reduction of task to be considered is that on account of weakness. Paragraph 3 (iii) of the G. O. runs as follows :—

“(iii) *Weakness*.—The case of weakly gangs should also be met by a reduction, of the task, and not of the class or wage. The Government has already pointed out in its orders No. 43, dated the 26th January 1897, and No. 108, dated the 19th February 1897, that Collectors can do this under section 107, and Divisional Officers* should freely exercise this power so as to suit the tasks to the capacity of weakly coolies till these recover their health, when the full task of their class should be demanded.”

I have already noted that in Bellary and Cuddapah Districts it is the practice to form weakly gangs, who are nevertheless put into class B. Similar gangs in Anantapur are, I understand, placed in class C. Apart from this, however, there are in many gang certain weak individuals belonging to the families of other workers, and who are, very properly, allowed to remain in the gangs. In Bellary I found a gang in which a deduction from the number of units was made on this account, and as long as it is accepted that persons who are unable to work should nevertheless be entitled to a full B wage there is no objection to this practice, and it is immaterial whether such individuals remain in the gang of their own village or are drafted to a special invalid gang. But deductions on account of weakness are not always made in this manner.

11. Some time ago, I think in May last, the Civil Surgeon of Kurnool inspected a number of gangs of relief labourers, the average number of

Weakness deductions in Kurnool District.

100. He found in each a certain number of weakly persons, and after tabulating the results he declared that those in which the proportion of weak individuals exceeded 10 per cent. should be classed as in *low* condition, while those in which the percentage was 10 or under should be classed as *fair*. For gangs in *low* condition he directed that the task should be reduced by 20 per cent., while for *fair* gangs a reduction of 10 per cent. was to be made. The report did not specify the minimum percentage which would entitle a gang to the 10 per cent. reduction, but among the gang inspected and classed as *fair* was one in which the weak members consisted of two women and two children, that is, 4 per

* The term Divisional Officer in Madras refers to a Revenue Officer, with the powers of an Assistant Collector, and not as in many parts of India to the Executive Engineer of a Public Works Division.

cent. of the whole. The Civil Surgeon circulated a copy of this report to his medical subordinates on the relief works, mostly men of the Hospital Assistant' class, and directed them to make similar examinations, and that the tasks should be reduced in accordance with the results.

12. This wholesale system of reduction for weakness was brought to my notice on the first occasion of my inspecting a gang in the Kurnool District, at Maddikhera, on the 11th July. I there found a *low* gang from whose task a deduction of 20 per cent. had been made on account of weakness. The Collector, Mr. Elwin, who was present, informed me that under the orders referred to which had emanated from the Civil Surgeon of the District, and to which therefore he had made no objection, every gang in the district had been declared either *fair* or *low*, and the task had been reduced for each, either by 10 or 20 per cent. The gang then under examination was No. 13 and was composed as follows:—

9 men	...	...	...	=	36 units.
16 adult boys	...	...	...	=	32 "
10 nursing mothers	...	...	...	=	15 "
1 pregnant woman	...	...	...	=	1½ "
41 other women	...	...	...	=	82 "
23 children	...	...	...	=	23 "
					<hr/>
100					190 "

The Hospital Assistant was called and directed to pick out the weak members, who were as below:—

2 nursing mothers	...	...	...	=	3 units.
12 women	...	...	...	=	24 "
1 man	...	...	...	=	4 "
3 adult boys	...	...	...	=	6 "
4 children	...	...	...	=	4 "
<hr/>					<hr/>
22					41 "
					<hr/>

These individuals were said to be suffering generally either from jaundice or anemia. The Hospital Assistant said that he examined all his gangs in accordance with the orders received, of which he produced a copy, on the 30th May last, and that the existing classification of *low* or *fair* had been made on the basis of that examination, and there had been no subsequent examination, nor had he had orders to repeat these examinations periodically. We endeavoured to ascertain whether the members of gang No. 13, who were put before us as weak, were the same individuals as those upon the strength of whose condition the gang had been classed as low six weeks before, but the Hospital Assistant failed to produce the papers.

In this particular case it would appear, on the authority of a Hospital Assistant, that 22 per cent. of the gang were in a weakly condition, but it is obvious that in such cases the percentage should be struck on the child-units and not on the individuals. The weakly units were 41 out of 190, or about 16 per cent. only, but the invalids were certainly capable of doing some work; and if their own tasks had been reduced by 50 per cent. it would only have been necessary to reduce the task of the whole gang by $(\frac{16}{2}$ or 8) instead of by 20 per cent. But it must be borne in mind that under the orders that I found in force, this reduction of 20 per cent. would have also been made if 11 individuals of the gang, say 6 nursing mothers and 5 children, or 14 out of 190 units, had been declared below *par*.

190) 3,80 (22
380

no: 22/p.c

11 f. c

On the following morning I inspected a gang employed on the excavation of a well which had then been carried down to a depth of about 22 feet. The work was of a special character, the gang should be composed of selected individuals and should be classed as A. A so-called A task was given, but I was unable to understand upon what basis it had been calculated, and a careful analysis shewed that it was a very light task, even for B workers. However, it appeared that this gang of selected workers had on the 30th May been classed as low on account probably of a few weakly individuals having been found among the carriers. It thus happened that, while the whole gang were entitled to the A wage on account of the diggers being picked men, they were entitled to a reduction of 20 per cent. of their task, because six weeks before a few weak individuals had been found among the carriers. This order of the Civil Surgeon seems to me very ill-considered especially when regard is paid to the subordinate agency by which alone it could be carried out.

13. The system of wholesale reductions on account of weakness of gangs is not confined to the Kurnool District, for Weakness deductions in Cuddapah. I was informed that in Cuddapah reductions of one-third or one-half the task are made when gangs are reported weak. In the only two works which I inspected in this district no deductions from the strength of the gangs had been made on account of weakness, though separate gangs of weakly individuals had been found. I have, however, obtained a register for one of these works (the Muddanura tank) for the 14th June from which I have abstracted the following particulars:—

Number of gangs.	Work on which employed.	Men.	Boy adults.	Nursing mothers, etc.	Other women.	Children.	Total.	Child-units.
21	Earthwork on bund ...	403	291	...	796	517	2,007	4,303
4	Watering and tamping ...	83	51	...	168	68	370	838
2	Carrying drinking water ...	32	20	...	201	20	273	590
	Total working gangs ...	518	362	...	1,165	605	2,650	5,731
2	Nursing mothers, etc., employed on "breaking clumps."	...	...	117	27	23	167	239
3	Weak gangs, untasked ...	99	...	...	275	48	422	994
	GRAND TOTAL ...	617	362	117	1,467	676	3,239	6,964

The gangs on the first three lines were employed on work, although only those on the first were actually tasked. Those on the last two lines, comprising 589 individuals out of 3,239, or 1,233 units out of 6,964, i.e., nearly 18 per cent., had only nominal work to do, but all received the B wage.

As regards the 21 gangs actually employed on earthwork I find that deductions from the full task, varying from 40 to 70 per cent. and averaging about 50 per cent., were made on account of distance, and that further deductions, varying from 20 to 30 per cent., were made for "other causes" which are not specified. These could hardly have included "weakness" with 18 per cent. of the units drafted to weakly gangs, and were probably on account of time spent in reorganizing the gangs, as there is a note on the form that this had been in progress

during half the day. The full task per digger had been fixed at 80 cubic feet per diem, but after reductions from all causes the average task actually set was less than 21 cubic feet, and the work of the carriers was lightened in proportion. At this rate the cost of the earthwork, including allowance for the rest-day wage, would work out to Rs. 53 per thousand cubic feet, though the normal cost would probably not have exceeded Rs. 6.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the G. O., paragraph 3 (ii)—

(ii) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang under section 97. A similar reduction should be made when gangs turn out short work owing to the absence of tools, or to inexperience in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here that "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers,* and that the "Engineer Officer in charge" means the "Overseer in charge."

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0.8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1.75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur District. According to the district task tables the correct task would have been 1.3 cubic feet. On enquiry it appeared that the task originally set had been 1.3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new G. O.) to 1.1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register shewed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the G. O. of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shewn. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0.9 and then to 0.8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full task out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the task reduced, and he had therefore authorised their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1.1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0.9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0.8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0.7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1.3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two works, and that indeed he had only visited two works since the issue of the G. O. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 489, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the G. O.s.

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso*—

"(4) From sub-paragraph (ii) of the G. O. it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, *but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded*, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinized to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carte blanche* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by the sanction of the Collector. It will be charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the G. O. of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when the works were first started, although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the G. O. as below:—

"4. *Fining*.—Fining should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer."

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the G. O. and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has rightly or wrongly been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals, who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shewn in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Befamcherka told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to shew fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shewn how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III, of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would shew separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the

Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code:—

Nature of task.	Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.	Cub. ft.
<i>Earthwork.</i>				
Sandy loam. Lead up 60 feet. Lift to 6 feet	11'85	9'00	9'00	6'5 (a)
Black cotton soil ditto ...	10'95	7'50	7'70	5'88 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard ...	10'13	6'0	4'70	4'50 (a)
<i>Metalling.</i>				
Stone easily procurable and broken. Lead—				
0—300 feet ...	1'88	1'7	1'7	1'7
3—4 furlongs ...	...	0'6	0'8	0'6
Stone easily procured, but hard to break—				
0—300 feet ...	...	1'2	1'3	1'2
3—4 furlongs ...	...	0'5	0'6	0'5
Stone hard to procure and break—				
0—300 feet ...	...	0'8	0'8	0'8
3—4 furlongs ...	...	0'3	0'4	0'3

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet.
The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shewn readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain

registers taken at random in the Bellary District from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal:—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cub. ft.	Normal value of work done at 3-12 per cent.	REMARKS.
			Cub. ft.	Rs.		Rs.	
16	Not noted.	Not noted.	1,329	139	10	...	
7			258	45	17	...	
20			790	147	18-12	...	
			2,377	431	18	89	11-seer basis.
			2,377	539	22-11	89	8.75 seers.
14	428	56	90	42	42-6	...	Ditto.
31	1,049	56	296	103	34-12	...	Ditto.
			2,763	684	35-6	104	

Reducing all results to the basis of 8.75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added to for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a very high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by

man, woman and child will be in the proportions 3, 2 and 1, and this is I think more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal breaking, and it may safely be assumed that either at this work or carrying a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit task is correct, the man's task in Madras is therefore too high, but it may be that the tasks were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit, by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, etc., and in some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool District these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheets by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the Circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil Departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers had made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though

they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connexion with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholum, or mixed cholum and ragi, containing 25 tolahs or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in other Codes being 16 ounces only for adult. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows $\frac{1}{2}$ an ounce of ghi for adults and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent. It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed, I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. Le Fanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than, the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family, or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow

the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. Le Fanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry shewed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. Relief works in charge of Civil Officers. At first a few works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works Officers, Subordination of Public Works to Civil Officers. except as regards matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional Officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional Officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect, but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to every one to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts, to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earthwork, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah District, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in

force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this Resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph 3 (i) of G. O. No. 216 of 1897 had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the G. O. of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other provinces*, excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this in all these other provinces, the Superintending Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two Superintendents of Works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code,

* Rules of the Famine Codes on the relation of Public Works to Civil Officers.

* Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.
Bengal, section 22.
North-West Provinces; section 27.
Punjab, section 49.

and as there defined are not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil Officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works Staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar Canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis FitzPatrick's note on the Ghaggar Canals Relief Works, dated 18th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner of Hissar from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works officers in relation to the Collector is defined in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "matters which are not of a merely technical nature" and "points strictly professional." If there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best Engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified by positive enactment. Power given in Madras to the Collector and his Divisional Officers in regard to tasks of the Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Engineer Officer in charge of the work, subject to the sanction of the Collector. This is an amplification of the more general direction that the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (f) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required "to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (e) of the Punjab Code.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the Local Officers, though as before stated detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (ii) of the Madras G. O. No. 216-Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers, and that the

"Engineer Officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works Officers in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil Officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil Officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, etc., etc. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adapt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adhesion to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer Officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts in which ordinary operations have been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper Subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to Sub-Overseers and Head Maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

Concluding remarks.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows:—

(a) All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the

A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.

(b) The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.

(c) The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. Le Fanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, etc., to which effect was given by G. O. No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a G. O. of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent. and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. Le Fanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the G. O. of March last would probably have become appreciable), to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under *children* only those under twelve years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July:—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.5
North-West Provinces and Oudh.	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.5
Punjab	65,156	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

Dated Simla, 28th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR.

Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this Division.

2. Government has in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shewn by examples in sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 3.

From the 2nd portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16 who are to be reckoned as two or three units according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii) of the G. O., it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{8}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be 8 hours from 7-30 A.M., to 2 noon and 2 P.M. to 5-30 P.M.

7. From paragraph 4 of the G. O., it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the G. O. now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue Officers have no concern with scrutinizing tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, etc., for the G. O. gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

(Signed) GHOSE,

CAMP ALLAGADDA;

Dated 11th May 1897.

Acting Head Assistant Collector.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G. O. No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) GHOSE,

Acting Head Assistant Collector.

No. 2794 F
206-2



FROM

T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., I.C.S.,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India,
Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine),

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Simla, the 18th August 1897.

Department of Revenue
and Agriculture.
(Famine.)

SIR,

I am directed to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine relief works in the Madras Presidency" by Mr T. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed to report on famine relief works in

Government of India (Revenue) Resolution
No. 20 F/157-1, dated 12th May 1897.

the several Provinces
in which famine opera-
tions are in progress.

2. Mr Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other Provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of task and to lower the gang classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes Mr Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With

your letter No.661,dated 2nd August 1897,a copy of Madras G.O. No.616 dated 24th July 1897 has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to Class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4. of the G.O. No.216 dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter, and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr Highan's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the Notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter No.2266 of the 14th June 1897. I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25-31 of the Notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other Provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the Notes as to the great loss in power involved

involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other Provinces that although the Civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter Department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code, and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other Provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appear to be the case in Madras.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

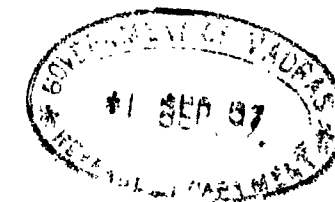
Your most obedient servant,

Holden

Deputy Secretary.

Revenue (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 7553



From
The Board of Revenue,
Revenue Settlement, Land Records and
Agriculture, Madras.

No. 596 Press.

Order

*Think these papers should be considered
and reported on by Mr. Le From with
the help of the Engineer & Collector
and Mr. proposed in linked file
C. No. 7848/97.*

9.9.97

30.9.97

Dated 28th August 1897.

Received 1. 9. 97

Registered 1. 9. 97

Enclosures

Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

*I cannot find 7848/97
am ang to make papers in this day*

Submitting to Government, Revenue
Department, remarks on the Chief
Engineer's Note regarding the
relative positions of Revenue and
Public Works officers in famine
administration.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

To be substituted for the Board's Proceedings of the same number and date.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1897.

Board of Revenue

(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture),

MADRAS.

Recd.

Enclosures

Regd.

1897.

Spare copies

Printed September th.

Proceedings, No. 596, 28th August 1897.

AUGUST.

Family Administration.—Submitting to Government, Revenue Department, remarks on the Chief Engineer's note regarding the relative positions of Revenue and Public Works officers in —.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE
(REVENUE SETTLEMENT, LAND RECORDS AND AGRICULTURE).

W. J. H. LEFANT, Esq.
(Famine Commissioner.)

Read—the following G.O., Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897:—

Read—the following note by the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, No. 739D., dated 7th July 1897:—

As head of the Public Works Department and a servant of Government, I think it my duty to acquaint the Government with my views as to the effect of the proposed order, as I feel convinced that it will make matters far worse than at present.

2. With reference to the remarks of the Honourable Mr. Grose to the effect that I am not aware of the difference between ordinary works carried out by ordinary coolies and relief works, I beg to submit that I am quite well aware of the difference as, during my service, I have had considerable experience both of ordinary works and relief works; and I am still of opinion that a Public Works officer knows more of the ordinary task to be demanded from an ordinary cooly than a Collector does and that, consequently, he is in a better position to suit the task according to the condition of the famine cooly; there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that a Public Works officer has less common sense than a Collector, or that he is more hard-hearted and unsympathetic. The other extreme of being too weak and soft-hearted is likely to lead to serious consequences, as it demoralises the people and causes needless waste of money, and there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department. It seems to me a most extraordinary notion that because the Public Works Department has been accustomed to deal with ordinary coolies on ordinary works, that it should not be considered capable of dealing with coolies on relief works. It might as well be said that a Revenue Officer, who had been in the habit of collecting the revenues of a district for years, is not fit to do so during seasons of failure of crops, as he would be too hard-hearted and unsympathetic, and therefore during these seasons the work should be done by the Salt, or Police, or some other department.

3. I think I was quite justified in saying that the famine works had been wrongly managed from the beginning by the fact that the Government is now trying to alter the system hitherto in force, and have a few large works on which coolies could be massed, instead of a vast number of scattered small works. In my tour report I have shown that, if the famine becomes widespread and the relief works are managed as hitherto, more than 1,600 upper subordinates will be required, and surely a system that necessitates such an immense amount of supervision cannot be called correct.

4. By the proposed order, the Collector and the Divisional Officers can issue orders direct to the subordinates in charge of relief works apparently on all subjects, while the Executive Engineer is debarred from giving orders to his own subordinates, except on strictly professional matters (which have not been clearly defined). By this order, the Executive Engineer is reduced to a nonentity, and it becomes absolutely impossible for him to maintain discipline on the works: moreover, the subordinate has to serve two masters. He may receive one order from the Collector, which may clash with one given by the Executive Engineer, even though the former order may be on

a non-professional subject, and the result may be that he is fined by both officers. I think it will be far better, if this order is to hold good, that the Executive Engineer should have nothing to do with the work, and the Collector took entire management with the help of subordinates lent by this department; the latter would then not have to serve two masters. I feel perfectly convinced that the present friction which is so much to be regretted will be immensely increased by the proposed order; the clause regarding needless interference will, I am afraid, have little effect on the native Revenue officials or even with others who are zealous. I feel sure there is not an officer in the department, who would object to the Collector visiting a work and discussing and arranging matters with him; but when Deputy Collectors, Deputy Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and others give orders regarding works in charge of an Executive Engineer, it is most galling to the latter, and it is still worse when a Collector acts on complaints made by his subordinates, who are only too glad to try and show their zeal by finding fault with the work of another department. It may be stated as a general rule that the Revenue officials are far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department, which tends to make interference on the part of the former more distasteful. My remarks are actuated entirely by a sense of the responsibility I owe to Government in my capacity as head of the Public Works Department, and I trust therefore they may have as much consideration given to them as to those of the Board of Revenue, in accordance with whose views the order seems to have been drafted. I have done all I can and the results of the proposed system must be awaited: what they will be, I hardly like to contemplate. I think it advisable that I should explain what I consider would be the best manner of carrying out relief works. The Bombay Code contemplates the division of relief works into large and small—the former being in charge of a Public Works officer assisted by a Civil officer if possible; the latter to be in charge of the Collector—and my proposals, which are as follows, are almost similar:—

1st—Large works should be concentrated as far as possible, not more than about twelve works being carried on in each district.

2nd—The distressed persons should be made to resort to these works, the arrangement for their conveyance and keep while travelling being entirely under the Revenue Department.

3rd—These large works should be entirely under the Public Works Department, assisted, if necessary, by a civil officer, who should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer in charge of the work, who, however, would not have the power of punishing or censuring him, except through the Collector.

4th—All small works started for the purpose of village relief should be under the Collector, subordinates, if necessary, being lent by the Public Works Department: these latter would be entirely under the orders of the Revenue Department.

5th—These small works should be restricted to deepening village tanks, repairing village roads, clearing prickly-pear, forest works and minor irrigation works.

5. By this arrangement I firmly believe that everything would work smoothly and be carried on much better than at present. The Revenue Department have now quite as much as, if not more than, it can do satisfactorily. The distribution of gratuitous relief is alone a duty that requires the most careful supervision, and if the Revenue Department look properly after that and also after kitchens, poor-houses, execution of small works and the many other duties connected with famine relief, it is as much as they can do satisfactorily, and interference with the work of the Public Works Department only adds to their work, does no good and causes endless friction and dissatisfaction.

6. I would call attention to the orders issued for the guidance of officers employed on relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, issued with G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1897, from which it will be seen that the Collector has not much control over relief works, which seem to be left almost entirely to the Public Works Department.

Order thereon—Mis. No. 3713, dated 19th July 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for very early remarks with reference to G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.

RESOLUTION—No. 596, dated 28th August 1897.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the famine of 1877-78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the Public Works Department in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O., No. 681, dated 15th February 1877, all works—two only excepted—were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that "their (Public Works Department) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer."

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say *non possumus*, which is often equivalent to *non volumus*. The cohesiveness and *esprit de corps* of the Royal Engineers are well known. The Civil Engineers have not only professional traditions to bind them together, but, hailing from one centre—the Engineering Eton—and mostly members, or associates, of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the G.O., above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras famine, observed that the order in question "*remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the Public Works Department, no action was taken on it in that department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it.*"

4. As now, so in 1877-78, there was considerable friction between the Public Works and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the "Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission," and, after referring to the want of harmony which prevailed, one Collector—volume II, page 508—very happily summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked upon their department as entirely a separate one and not part of the district machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power, adding that "there was too much tendency in this department to the *imperium in imperio*." This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an *impasse*, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter—Vol. I *ibid*, page 54—as follows:—

"Works should, as far as possible, be organized under Department of Public Works Officers, but that department should be under the direct control of the Civil Administration of the district. Nothing could have been more embarrassing, more detrimental to public interests, and the real object of providing life-saving labour than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the famine districts of this Presidency during the early months of our

famine, and more or less throughout, as between the district administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869-70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked—and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more matured reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the district administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but Department of Public Works Officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interest."

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of Famine Administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendations contained in paragraph 129, the Famine Commission observed that "it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it", and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in paragraph 130 of the same:—

"The Collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works, as over all other arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works Officers, in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in every thing, except arrangements of a merely technical nature."

The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memorandum now under consideration, that "he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate." It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer's interpretation of "doing all that he can" takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the *mot d'ordre* amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell's representations, or the *amour propre* of the department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds would clear away. After all, it is a very small minority who have caused friction, the majority of the Public Works Officers on famine duty having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where the Executive Engineer, one small explosion excepted, and his two chief Assistants, one of them a Royal Engineer, have loyally set aside professional prejudice, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Two successive Executive Engineers, and an Assistant, a Royal Engineer, have done the same in Anantapur. The present Executive Engineer, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that the Collector wants. The Executive Engineer—up to a certain date—and his Assistant, in Ganjam, have co-operated well with the Collector. The work of the Executive Engineer in charge of relief, during the preliminary stages of distress, in communication with the then

Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficile have been Superintending Engineers in charge of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, the Executive Engineer in charge during the first months of distress in Kurnool, and the present Executive Engineer in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and the Executive Engineer have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines of the Code.

9. As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division, is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to the Superintending Engineer that all the district task schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, left his subordinates ample power to enforce tasks. It is doubtful if, during the several successive days in which the delegate of the Government of India was the recipient of the Superintending Engineer's confidences, sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these points. These schedule tasks, except where the Superintending Engineer, without authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Engineer took upon himself to enhance the Superintending Engineer's enhancements, have been generally in force all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them, the subordinates of the Public Works Department are primarily responsible for the omission. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had been duly maintained, all these matters would have been settled between the Executive Engineer of the district and the Collector. The Executive Engineer, Ganjam, has recently been remarking on the subject of tasks, &c. So has his Assistant. The Assistant Engineer's remarks go first to the Executive Engineer; then to the Superintending Engineer; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Ganjam, and possibly might work the whole way round to the Assistant Engineer again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of Famine Administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to its success, is that *the district should be the unit of administration*, and that all questions should be settled in the district. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters, even if the *personnel* of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would probably be referred to the Chief Engineer, and the answer would have to filter down through the same channels. There would be this further drawback that, whereas the Engineer is always tolerably certain of support from the head of his department, the Revenue officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, during 1877-78, in Salem, two Royal Engineers were simply impracticable, and it is to them specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his district (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume II, Chapter III, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency, that the present position was defined in the Code in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the district, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code *does* assign him, or the Chief Engineer—as he is there termed—a place, but it is a place *in* the district—section 37, Bombay Code—and that Code

does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides—section 38—that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, *through* the Chief (*i.e.*, Superintending) Engineer to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, *through* the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer “sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to report them *to the Collector*” direct, “even though they may not lie within his official sphere”—section 39 (*b*)—but he is *not* to report them, through a round—about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, to the Collector,—section 38 (*a*)—and similarly, officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer are subordinates to the Divisional Officer, section 38 (*b*). Section 36 of the Bombay Code enunciates the principles referred to in paragraph 6 *supra*, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation, which, if acted on, would have rendered the present reference unnecessary: “It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works staffs.” The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of serious friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that his reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he not done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the Public Works Department officers arrogate independence, and of the urgent necessity for speaking out, once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific corps devoted, to the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they co-operated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied.

11. In paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that “there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department,” in the matter of tasking. There is nothing esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with a very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of *rates*, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of *tasks*, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be founded on tasks, but it is very doubtful if they ever, in practice, are. The Railway has its rates, so has the Public Works Department, so has the Local Fund Department, all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work with very minute information on the subject of tasks is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine Commissioner has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner, No. 555, dated 7th August 1897, and No. 558, dated 10th August 1897).

He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by the Executive Engineer, Anantapur, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to the Executive Engineer that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant

Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to the Chief Engineer, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels (they have had one such undisposed of for nearly three months—Board's Proceedings, Mis., No. 4186, dated 10th June 1897), it is necessary that some one person must be recognised as paramount in district administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and, in non-professional matters, under whom, no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine-matters, officers of rank, as Major C. D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other Scientific Department—the Medical—has never objected to work with, or under, the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works Officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstructions.

13. Paragraph 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forth-coming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the *non possumus* ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within four years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded—a happy contrast to miles of broken metal.

14. The position taken up in paragraph 4 is one which cannot be accepted. There is nothing to prevent the Engineer from issuing orders direct to his subordinates in all professional matters, and, in the non-professional matters, with the Collector's consent. As the Executive Engineer cannot be everywhere, it is urgent that some one should have the power of correcting, on the spot, whatever is wrong, and this power may safely be given to the Collector and his Divisional Officers. For famine purposes, the Executive Engineer becomes the Collector's Famine Assistant; so far from being a "nonentity," he is the Collector's *alter ego* for the organisation and anything which he finds wrong in non-professional matters. This he ought to do, instead of writing reports to his departmental superiors and the Chief Engineer. If the proper relation between the Collector and the Executive Engineer were insisted on, all these differences of opinion would be discussed, and settled locally, to the great advantage of administration. The Chief Engineer has consistently encouraged the reverse action by accepting, and passing on to Government, petty complaints which the local officers should have made to the Collector, not to him, thereby discouraging the very *entente cordiale* which it should be his first object to foster. The Famine Commissioner does not anticipate any undue interference on the part of native Revenue officials. They would have little room for interference, once the Executive Engineer gets into his proper position, as assigned to him by Government and the Famine Code. As to interference by Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors, &c., the Chief Engineer does not seem to have grasped the purport of the order against which he protests. The power of interference is limited to the Collector and Divisional Officers. The Famine Commissioner is not aware of any instance of such interference. It must

be observed that the Code contemplates the appointment of Civil officers to large works, and such officers are so employed in Bombay on petty salaries. The Famine Commissioner deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel McNeil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than a paymaster, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has purposely refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

15. As to the proposals in paragraph 4 (1), this is the distance test, condemned by the Famine Commission and by the Madras Government, pure and simple, and there are no such large works anywhere available. This disposes of paragraph 4 (2) and (3); paragraph 4 (4) and (5) is the intermediate system, which Collectors have been ordered to introduce, where possible.

16. As to paragraph 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, unless, indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:—

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department, rather than independently. When, in 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer Officer—Sir Michael Kennedy—in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters not strictly professional and technical that the Revenue Department can interfere."

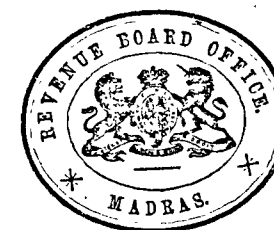
The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional Officers are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Copy and Extract.)

Dr. C. C. C. 176.
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department. *He is already satisfied.*



Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture),

Dated 28th August 1897.

No. 596 Press

Note for the Fam. Assct.

The Board has sent a revised copy of Mr. Le Fain's remarks on the C.E.'s note re: relative positions of the P.W.D. and the Rev. Dept. in famine administration. The file is now in circ. The first copy used by Govt. was in manuscript and it cannot therefore be stated what the alterations in the revised copy are.

35 7 READ. Proceedings of Government Revenue Department, No: 3713 dated 19th July 1897.

Resolution.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the Famine of 1877-78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the P.W.D. in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O. No: 681, dated 15th February 1877, all works - two only excepted - were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the P.W.D. giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that "their (P.W.D.) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered under the orders of the Collector or Divisional officer."

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say non possumus, which is often equivalent to non volumus. The cohesiveness and

of the same. The Royal Engineers is well known. The all works are over all.

2.

bind them together, but, hailing from one centre-the Engineering Eton-and mostly members or associates of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the C.O. above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras Famine, observed that the order in question " remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the P.W.D., no action was taken on it in that Department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded, and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it."

4. As now, so in 1877/78, there was considerable friction between the P.W. and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the "Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission", and, after referring to the want of harmony which prevail, one Collector-Volume 11, p 508-very happily summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked "upon their department as entirely a separate one, and not part of the District machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power", adding that there is too much tendency in this department to the imperium in imperio. This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an impasse, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department, to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter-Volume 1, ibid Page 54 - as follows:-

" Works should, as far as possible, be organised under Department of Public Works officers, but that Department should be under the direct control of the Civil administration of the District. Nothing could have been more embarrassing

3.

providing life-saving labor, than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the Famine Districts of this Presidency during the early months of our famine, and more or less throughout, as between the District administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869-70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked- and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more mature reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the District administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but Department of Public Works officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interests.

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of famine administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendation, para 129, the Famine Commission observed that "it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake but, for the sake of the people employed on it", and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in para 130 of the same:- "The Collector of the District should ex-fer-

arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other Superior Authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works officers in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in everything except arrangements of a merely technical nature". The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memo now under consideration that he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate". It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer's interpretation of "doing all that he can" takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the Order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the mot d'ordre amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell's representations, or the amour propre of the Department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds ^{would} clear away.

After all it is a very small minority who

5.

having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where Mr: Murray, - one small explosion excepted - Mr: Morin and Lieutenant Close, R.E., have loyally set aside professional prejudices, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Mr: Heinig in Anantapur, and, after him, Mr: Romilly and Lieutenant Barstow, have done the same. Mr: Johnston, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that Mr: Elwin wants - Mr: De Morgan - up to a certain date - and Mr: Lacey, in Canjam, have cooperated well with Mr: Taylor. Mr: Somers-Ive's work in communication with Mr: R. Campbell, the then Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficle have been Mr: De Winton and, in a less degree, Mr: Larminie, Superintending Engineers, and Executive Engineers S. Subramania Iyer in Kurnool, and Mr: P. R. Allen in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and Mr: Clerk, Executive Engineer, have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines ~~on the lines~~ of the Code.

9 As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When Mr: De Winton is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to Mr: De Winton that all the District Task Schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O. No: 216, dated 30th March

1897, left his subordinates ample room

Mr. Higham was the recipient of Mr. De Winton's confidence sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these people. These schedule tasks, except where Mr. De Winton, with authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Arogiasamy Mudali, took upon himself to enhance Mr. De Winton's enhancements, have been generally enforced all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them the subordinates of the P.W. Department are primarily responsible for the ~~omission~~. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had ^{been} duly maintained these matters would have been settled between the Chief Engineer of the District and the Collector. Mr. De Morgan recently ~~see~~ remarking on the subject of tasks &c. So Mr. Lacey's remarks go first to Mr. De Morgan; then to Mr. Lacey; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Canjam, and possibly might work the whole way round to Mr. Lacey again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of famine administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to ^{its} success, is that the District should be a unit of administration, and that all questions should be settled in the District. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters even if the personnel of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an Overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would finally be referred to the Chief Engineer, who would have to filter down through the ~~experience~~ at all. Rates ought

the Revenue Officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, Captain Pennycuik and Mr. De Villamil R.E., were simply impracticable, and it is, then specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his District, (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume 11, Chapter 111, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency that the present position was defined in the Code, in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the District, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code does assign him - or the Chief Engineer, as he is there termed - a place, but it is a place in the District-Section 37 Bombay Code - and that ^{Code} does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides-Section 38- that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, through the Chief (i.e. Superintending) Engineer, to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, through the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer, "sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to ~~rep~~ report them to the Collector", direct, "even though they may not ^{lie} ~~lie~~ within his official sphere" -Section 39 (b) - but he is not to report them, through a round-about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the P.W.D., employed on relief works, shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, ^{to} the Collector, -Section 38(a) - and similarly officers of the

P.W.D., below the rank of the Assistant Engineer, are nates to the Divisional officer, Section 38 (b). Section of the Bombay Code enunciated the principles referred para 6 supra, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation which, if acted on, would have rendered the present recommendation unnecessary:- "It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works Staffs." The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the P. W.D. officers are independent, and of the urgent necessity for speaking once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific devoted the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they cooperated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied; but, in that case there would have been no tale of woe to pour into the ears of Mr. Higham, C.I.E. It is regrettable that Mr. Higham on his first arrival, should have thrown himself into the arms of "his old friend," Mr. De Winton.

11. In para 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that "there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department" in the matter of tasking. There is no esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of rates, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of tasks, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be based on the value of the land.

one person must
are. The Railway has its rates; so has the Public Works Department; so has the Local Fund Department; all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work, with very minute information on the subject of tasks, is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine Commissioner, has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner No: 555 dated 7-8-97 and 558 dated 10-8-97). He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by Mr. Romilly, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to Mr. Romilly that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the P.W.D. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to Colonel Mc. Neil Campbell, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels, (they have had one such undisposed of for ^{nearly} 5 months -

One person must be recognised as paramount in the administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and in non-professional matters, under whom no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine matters, officers of rank, as Major C.D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other scientific department-the Medical-has never objected to work with or under the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstruction.

13. Para 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forthcoming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the non possumus ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within 4 years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine Zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever Famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on Capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded; a happy contrast to miles of bare metal.

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deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel Mc.Neil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than paymasters, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has properly refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

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16. As to para 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-west Provinces and Oudh, unless indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the Famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating Government Order dated 19th July 1897, No: 593, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:-

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of Famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department

rather than independently. When, in, 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer officer-Sir Michael Kennedy-in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters, not strictly professional and technical, that the Revenue Department can interfere". The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional officers, are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Extract)

H. Buckle 30/8

Famine Secretary.

To

The Secretary to Government,
Revenue Department.

C. No. 7313.

1. Hon. Mr. G. S. C. S. } Again with reference to H. E. into meeting
2. Hon. Mr. H. B. S. K. C. S. } The Government of India, Rev. & Agri. Dept.
3. Hon. Mr. E. The Hon. } Dated 18th August 1897.
11/2/97.

FOR OFFICE.

The Hon. Mr. S. S. C. S.

Counter initials -

The report seems to me fair throughout & what was to be expected for a very superior man as Mr. Le Tenn called him. I agree with the Rev. Sec. about the adjustment of tasks & the portion of work which he assigned to the Rev. Dept & the S. W.; but I suppose, before we reply to India, we must refer their letter for report to the Land Revenue Committee. I am afraid we shall get much help from him, but the revenue committee necessary in consideration of his position.

This is so, I think, 16/9/97 and will therefore only worry that if the S. of March last has worked mischief, as you said, it is to a great extent because of personal

The Government of India forwards copy of Mr. Higham's report on his inspection of the Madras relief works; and requests a report from this Government on two of the most important points dealt with in it, viz., the adjustment of standard tasks and the regulation of Revenue and P. M. Officers. It also desires to be favoured with any remarks which this Government would wish to make on Mr. Higham's report generally. It is proposed in this note to state briefly the various points dealt with in the report and to refer in some detail to the two subjects particularly referred to by the Government of India.

2. Paras 2 - 16 of the report contain a description of what Mr. Higham actually saw on the relief works here together with his criticisms thereon. As the management of relief works at the period of his visit was regulated by the orders contained in G.O. 21

naturally devoted to a statement
of the instructions in the orders
of these orders and how they have
worked in practice. As these instructions
have since been almost all of them
withdrawn, it is unnecessary to con-
sider them in detail; the following
points should however be referred to.

3. Para 2 of the report. Mr. Higham
refers to the fact that most of the
relief works in the Deccan districts
are road works, which could not all
of them be maintained in a state of
efficiency when the famine is over.

4. Para 3. In this para he appears
to think that the works are too scat-
tered. He ~~appears to think~~ ^{apparently considers} that large
central works with compulsory resi-
dence should be tried, and doubts the
assertion that the Madras labourers
are averse to residence in camp.

5. Para 4. He refers apparently with
approval to the management of relief
works in the earlier stages of dis-
tress prior to the issue of G.O. 216
dated 30th March 1897; this manage-
ment may be summed up in the phrase

"the strict enforcement of the stand-
ard tasks of the Code". But as these
tasks, as Mr. Higham himself admits,
were too high, their strict enforce-
ment led to undesirable results, and
it was to rectify this that the or-

ders in G.O. 216 dated 30th March
1897 were issued which have led to
results erring on the other extreme.

6. Paras 5 & 6 of the report. The

Whether the famine committee expected
to be as he should have done
+ left in the dark as to the
mischievous which was being
worked. Indeed, I may go further
that is very much what he
is doing up to this minute -

BD

2/9/97

Think these papers should be referred to
as he is to be considered and refused
after after conference with the
Com. Collection, D.P.W. Officers and so.

in presence of my personal on C.A.
2/48/97.

A.G.

Yes 30.9.97

But was 2/48/97

not put up. 2/10/97

BD

4/10/97

A

But to the phrase "the strict
enforcement of the Code"
11/6/97.

has undesirable result of any kind
followed the above policy

11/6/97

Government never authorized that
weakly should be placed in class B,
nor that any but professional labour-
ers should be placed in class A.

Paras 11 & 12 of the report. This
exemplifies the evil result of allow-
ing medical officers to interfere in
the management of relief works. The
District Surgeon's order is wholly un-
authorized; the only semblance of a
justification for it is the instruc-
tion issued by the board in B.P. 159

d. 25.2.97 tacitly approved by Government
in G.O. 17, dated 30th March 1897.

These instructions based on G.O. 108,
dated 19th February 1897, referred to
deductions to be made in the case of
individual coolies in low and fair co-
dition (as distinguished from emaci-
ated and weakly labourers), and cannot
be held to authorize such deductions
in the task of gangs containing a few
such coolies; further no arrangements
were made to revert to full tasks and
when the coolies regained their strength.

The sub-para at the bottom of
page 5 of the report contains a wrong
calculation of percentage.

5. Paras 14 & 15 of the report. Mr.
Higham animadvertson a circular is-
sued by Mr. Ghose (Kurnool) and the re-
sults that have issued therefrom; but
the circular correctly conveys the in-
tention of Government except in one
point, namely, where it says that
it is only individuals not gangs that

should be fined for insubordination or malingering; this portion was, however, subsequently cancelled. Nor did the Government intend that the excessiveness of a task should be gauged upon what the coolies actually turn out.

Para 16. That the effect of para 4 of G.O. 216 dated 30-3-97 would be practically to abolish fining and that in view of this para and the general tenour of the order officers in charge of works would be afraid to recommend or resort to fines was anticipated at the time the order was passed.

Para 17. Mr. Higham states that the Code tasks are too high and that the tasks in the district schedules are too low, though he admits that it is difficult to speak with confidence without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly. The district tasks referred to are the full tasks adopted for the districts with reference to para 3 of G.O. 216 dated 30-3-97

Para 18. The calculations are no doubt open to criticism but there is no doubt as to the general result that the out-turn is ridiculously small in proportion to outlay.

Para 19. There is nothing on record in the office to show how the unit task was arrived at, but it is probable that it was taken at one-fourth of that of the adult male.

But of course Mr. Higham had no business to delegate his powers to the officers in charge of the works. See also para 15 of the report in which Mr. Higham says that he only visited 2 weeks from March to July. This is extremely queer.

vide para 15 of the report in which Mr. Higham says that he only visited 2 weeks from March to July. This is extremely queer.

He turned out so. But it didn't strike me so at the time.

*Side note para 5 of 13 P 533 5497 10
+ also call letter in G.O. 4451/M 15 5-7 11
5497 4*

Para 20 sub-para 1 of this sub-para is written under a misapprehension. Prior to the issue of G.O. 216 dated 30-3-97 the paymasters were (under para 28 of appendix VI) to make deductions from pay proportionate to the short-out-turn as shown in column 9 of the work sheet (appendix III, Form E, part II). The circular was simply to the effect that that they were not to make such deductions unless a specific recommendation was made on the ground of malingering or insubordination; this was in accordance with G.O. and did not give a discretion to paying officers to enforce fines or not.

In the third sub-para Mr. Higham takes exception to the principle enunciated in para 31 of appendix VI and emphasized in G.O. 562 dated 13-7-97 (para 2) of keeping the paying agency distinct from the supervising.

Para 21. The Govt. has not yet received the B.P. issuing G.O. 430 dated 3-6-97; so far as the Govt. office is aware the Famine Commissioner has not yet issued the order G.O. to Collectors.

Para 22. The Govt. has already issued orders that the gratuitous relief ration should be the same as the minimum ration. The point may be further considered on receipt of Dr. King's report.

Para 23. This has already been dealt with in the B.P. in the confidential paper now in circulation with a draft order. Paras 25-31 are devoted to the relations between the P.W. and the Rev. Dept.

in this Presy
ion assigned to the P.W.D. is in ac-
cording with the policy of section 24
of the ^{Famine Code} Code, but that in four other pro-
vinces in which this section has been
adopted word for word much larger powers
are accorded to the P.W.D. than ^{here} in Madras,
that this restriction of the sphere of
the Dept. involves a loss of power be-
sides leading to friction between the two
Depts. He also states that the organization
and management of large bodies of untrain-
ed labourers and the setting of suitable
tasks to them are technical matters which
a non-professional Dept. cannot effectively
discharge.

The system of tasking referred to
in para 26 is that which Govt. has in G.O.
authorized to be given a trial to.

(2) Para 33. This states what Mr. Higham con-
siders to be the distinctive features of the
Madras administration, and it is on this main-
ly that the Govt. of India letter is based.
Attention is drawn to two points in this
letter:-

I. Tasks (a) the excessiveness of the stan-
dard tasks of the Code. (b) Powers given to
subordinate officials to reduce these tasks.

II. Relations of the P.W. and the Rev. Dept.

13 The Code tasks are supposed to be the
averages of the results worked up to in
the famine of 1891-92. Mr. Higham says that
they are excessive and this was also the
experience in the earlier months of this
year. As a result of this experience the
Govt. ordered that the tasks should be re-

3 of Rule 216 (11/11/17)
20-2-17

vised and
for each district with due regard to
nature of the soil and to varying lead
lift. Such tables have now been framed
for all the Deccan districts, but Mr. Hi-
gham is inclined to the opinion that the
revised tasks are too low though he is
not positive. This is a matter that should
be decided by the P.W.D. in the light of
recent experience. As regards (b) i.e. the
powers allowed to subordinate officials
to reduce the standard tasks, Mr. Higham
refers particularly to what he observed
in Kurnool where under Mr. Ghose's circu-
lar overseers were empowered to reduce
the tasks wherever they found these ex-
cessive and medical subordinates could
have the tasks reduced by 10 and by 20
per cent by declaring the gang to be in
fair or low condition. This result has fol-
lowed the practical working of the order
issued in G.O. 216 dated 30-3-97 and of
the instructions ^{locally} approved in G.O. ²¹⁷ 30-3-97
though Govt. never intended that the power
to reduce tasks should be exercised by
subordinate officials. Discretion to reduce
tasks was no doubt necessary, when the
prescribed tasks were as a rule excessive,
but now that appropriate schedules are to
be adopted for each district it is a ques-
tion for consideration whether the prin-
ciples of paying proportionately to the
work turned out should not be enforced
uniformly, and whether the power to reduce
tasks should be allowed save in very ex-
ceptional cases or to any but the supe-
rior controlling officers.

tion assigned to the P.W.D. as to the terms
in which the Govt. of India is to be re-
plied to with reference to its enquiry
about the position which the P.W.D. oc-
cupies in this Presidency in regard to
relief works. The notes and discussions
on which G.O. No. 5734/17/7 were based will
be found stitched with the original of
this order.

RL
31-8-17

Phase in annexed note.

11/4/17

The office note calls attention to the fact
in Mr. Higham's note in the following note
written to suggest what has been done in
consequence of it.

In the earlier paras of his report
Mr. Higham notes what he found and saw
on the Beccan works. He says "I under-
stand that relief works in the Beccan
were originally carried out in strict
accordance with the provisions of the
Famine Code. The gangs were classified
as therein directed and an attempt was
made to enforce the standard tasks laid
down in the Code, fines being freely
imposed in proportion to the deficiency
in the executed tasks and without any
minimum wage limit. But by G.O. 216 of
30th March 1897, this had all been
changed." He then notes what he found
under the following heads:---

A. Classification instead of being
made as laid down in the Code had
ceased to exist and all gangs were
in "B" class.

B. Tasks were nominal.

(a) because of distance reductions.

(b) because of weakness deductions.

(c) because of deductions for "ex-
cessive task".

C. Fines were never imposed.

2. A. Classification is dealt with in
paras 5 & 6 of Mr. Higham's note. With
regard to this there is nothing to be
said except that the result attained
was exactly that intended and wished
for by Government.

3. B. Tasks were nominal because of

...ion assigned to the P...
Distance deductions. The ques-
tion arises whether it would not be
well to do away with this reductions
altogether and if necessary to put the
people on the works. It is obvious
that though often ordered by Govern-
ment no attempt has ever been made to
put the people. even if the people
cannot be putted on the work in the
interests of discipline and order and
to remove a sore temptation from the
subordinates in charge, it is expedient
to do away with distance allowances.
This indulgence is allowed in no other
Presidency and has been allowed here
mainly in deference to the outcry which
Mr. Lefau raises about the "distance
test". Nothing has ever, so far as I am
aware, been put forward to prove that
this allowance was necessary.

4. (6) The weakness deductions. The Code
system is, I submit, this. It sets up
standard tasks which are the result of
experience and which are or can easily
be made entirely suitable. Mr. Higham
thinks the Code task too high, but
speaks doubtfully on the point. The A
task so fixed is intended to be equal
to the amount of work usually performed
by able-bodied labourers on ordinary
works. (Sec. 100 of the Code). "B" task
is only three-fourths of this and "C"
task is half. It is of course of the
first importance that these tasks
should be ~~anywhere~~ every where uniform
in weight and that they should not be

lightly ^{various} viewed. The ^{one} recognized
what is certainly true that it is im-
possible and unnecessary to adjust the
task to the capacity of the individual
worker. It is the attempt to do this
which has ended here, as it must always
end, simply in adjusting the task not
to his capacity but to his liking and
works cease then, of course, to be in any
way deterrent or in any way a test of
distress. It is different when an atten-
tion is made to adjust the task to the gang
of 100 persons. The task is necessarily
an average but an average which can be
adjusted with much exactitude. For the
working capacity of one gang of 100 ag-
ricultural labourers taken at random
will differ little, if at all, from the
working capacity of a second gang si-
milarly taken and if it does, the two
gangs can be brought together by alter-
ing a few individuals. Hence the Code
provides that tasks shall only be ^{varied} ~~made~~
under the orders of a responsible of-
ficer, viz., the Collector (Sec. 107).
This being so, in G.O. no. 108 of the 2nd
February, it was pointed out to the
Board that the Collector could vary the
task and at once the Board in its Pro-
ceedings of the 25th February, No. 159,
ordered Collectors to reduce the task
"so as to meet the special ^{circumstances} requirements
of ^{the} relief workers in any place", i.e.,
the tasks were to be suited to the capa-
city of individuals. The Honourable
Mr. Grose summed up the Proceedings

line "that the board makes a rule of
that should be an exception", but the
G.O. as issued upheld the board. This
order is the origin of the weakness de-
ductions and as much if not more than,
G.O. No. 216 of 30th March 1897 has con-
tributed to swell the numbers on relief
and to demoralize the works. I submit it
should be cancelled definitely and that
it should be distinctly laid down that
the use of the power of the Collector
in such cases is ~~xxx~~ to be the excep-
tion and not the rule. From this order
flow the orders about reduced tasks ac-
cording as the ~~gangs~~ ~~gangs~~ are
good, fair and low as also the district
task tables, perhaps a doubtful addi-
tion to the Code and which are said by
Mr. Higham to be too low. They are ob-
jectionable because the standard tasks
should be uniform for all districts ~~but~~ ^{not}
different for each.

5. (c) Deductions for excessive tasks.

Mr. Higham quotes para 3 (ii) of G.O.
216 of 30th March. The para in its first
and second sentences, ~~the~~ direct re-
versal of the orders laid down by Gov-
ernment in G.O. No. 43 dated 26th Jan'y.
1897. It nullifies the whole Code system
as above explained ^{in para 3 (i)} ~~about the task~~. The
para should, I submit, be cancelled. The
remaining point now is whether the Di-
visional officer and the Overseer in
charge should have the power to alter
tasks. Mr. Higham thinks the Divisional

Officer should not and I submit ex-
istence of this scarcity has brought out
good reasons to agree with him. I sub-
mit the Executive Engineer might better
be given the power and that it should
not be given at all to the Overseer in
charge of the work. In criticising this
section Mr. Higham has spent most of his
energy in castigating Mr. Ghose, but as
it seems to me most unfairly. There is
not a direction in Mr. Ghose's circular
which is not justifiable from the order
of Government on which it is based or
~~from~~ the Board's Proceedings communicat-
ing it except one unimportant particu-
lar.

6. C. Fines.

Mr. Higham finds that the practice
of fining has ceased and that the Over-
seers in charge are afraid to fine. He
says apart from the unwillingness of the
subordinates in charge to shew fines in
their accounts, it must be admitted that
the tasks are so ^{low} ~~low~~ that the gangs
can hardly help completing them. The
Code system is that a man may be fined
down to the D wage and beyond it if
there is continued and deliberate refu-
sal to do the allotted task in the hope
of forcing the authorities to relax
discipline and the Code system has now
been brought into force again.

7. Task tables.

Mr. Higham advocates the me-
thod of tasking sanctioned on Mr. De
Winton's recommendation in G.O. No. 577

d. 15.7.97

On my own experience I know that the unit task system works easily and well but it is not of much consequence what system is adopted provided it is easily adaptable to varying numbers and is uniform and certain.

8. The value of the work turned out.

The Government of India have directed that a special report on this point be submitted at the end of the famine operations. It will then be seen what the proportion is. Mr. Higham brings out that the cost of wages was more than six times that of the normal value of the work done, i.e., the normal value is about 17 per cent of the actual expense. ^{working} strictly according to the Code, I get in Salem in 1821-22 a normal value of 58.39 per cent, vide flag Z in the volume put up.

9. Proportion of man's task to child's task. The proportion taken in the Code is 1 man = 2 women = 4 children. Mr. Higham thinks the proportion should be

Flagged Z

When writing this I have seen Col. Campbell's distribution of task from the D.P.W. notes. There being a note from Mr. Higham but it must be remembered that the D.P.W. child is much older than the village child.

M. H. 17.

licers

1 man = 2 women = 3 children of 10 years of age. proportions were worked in Salem with difficulty and it is noticeable that Mr. LeFanu's experiment noted in G.O. No 714 d 20-1 brings out that the Code proportion as regards the child and man is fair.

10. System of payment.

Mr. Higham objects to the principle of keeping the working and paying agencies separate and thinks that more direct checks worked by departmental establishments may be substituted for the automatic check thus provided. He is wrong in saying the arrangement causes friction or jealousy and the best proof perhaps of its success is that the Mail correspondents have never once ^{noted} entered a complaint by a cooly that his wages had not been paid to him undiminished. This was not the case in 1877 when fraud was rampant owing to a considerable portion of the coolies wages being intercepted and owing to false personation.

Mr. Higham in paras 25 to 31 of his note deals in effect with two subjects.

1. The utilization in relief of the D.P.W. and especially of the Superintending Engineer.

2. In para 26 and also in 17 and 19 he argues that tasks have not been properly fixed and that that duty should be entrusted to the D.P.W.

The Govt. of India in para 3 of their letter invite attention to the question of revising the standard and tasks and in para 4 they point out that the

relations of the officers of the D.P.W. with the District revenue authority does not correspond with that of other provinces. What this means I do not know but probably they intend to call attention to the position ^{relation} ~~as regards the position~~ of the D.P.W. to Revenue officers here ^{as regards relief matters} and to the friction which has resulted therefrom. I shall set out below the orders governing the position of the two Departments to one ~~and~~ another and shall show how that position can be adjusted so as to avoid friction and also how the question of adjusting tasks can be solved. It will only then remain to consider Mr. Higham's remarks as to the position of the Suptg. Engineer.

11. In regard to the position of the Revenue and D.P.W. officers Govt. have laid down,

1. That ~~the~~ the Collector is the responsible head and director of relief operations within his own district. ^{It} must be distinctly ~~be~~ understood that the P.W.D. staff engaged in connection with relief works is under the control of Collectors in all but technical matters."

2. That the Collector has the same power of punishing Executive, not controlling officers on relief works as a Suptg. Engineer has.

3. Every D.P.W. officer employed on relief works is subordinate in all matters not strictly professional to the Collector.

Similarly D.P.W. officers below Asst. Engineers are subordinate to the Divisional officers.

4. Differences of opinion between the Collector and Executive Engineer referred through the Chief Engineer to the Famine Commissioner.

And differences of opinion between subordinates through the Executive Engineer to the Collector.

5. The Commissioner may give Civil officers below a Collector fitted for it by service and discretion the authority of a Collector over Asst. Engineers.

6. The Executive Engineer is jointly responsible with the Collector for seeing that relief works do not fail of their object. I submit that in fact the above rules though determining the question of subordinates, leave nearly as many opportunities for friction as there ~~were~~ before. What is really necessary seems to be to define the spheres of duty of the two departments accurately. That the D.P.W. should ~~be~~ be subordinate to the Collector in ^{all but} technical and professional matters is excellent as a principle but is useless as a practical guide. For example the Chief Engineer thought the scale of establishments was a technical matter but Govt. overruled him. The only way to define the duties of the two Departments is to lay down what heads of work they are to attend to. The following are the main ^{lines} ~~lines~~:

1. Classification
2. Ganging.
3. Tasking

Officers

40216 (Flag A)
3039

of wages.

5. Payment of wages
6. Measuring up of work
7. Fining
8. Water supply
9. Hutting
10. Kitchens
11. Doles to children of workers
12. Provision and custody of tools
13. Locality, opening and closing of works
14. Provision of work in the specified locality
15. Provision of funds and establishments for works.

To shortly consider these seriatim.

As to 1 and 2 there can I think be little difference of opinion that the D.P.W. officers in charge can do them as well as any Civil officer. What must be the ^{done} ~~is~~ is defined in two sections of the Code which one is just as capable of understanding as the other. *and just as likely to do correctly.*

As to 3 I have endeavoured to shew above that the existing orders viz., that the task shall vary with the individual are contrary to the intention of the Code and are hopelessly vicious in principle. If the principle that a task is to be fixed beforehand and that that task can only be altered under the orders of a responsible officer (which is the Code intention) be adopted, there is no difficulty at all in putting this item under the D.P.W. officer. The standard task which should be moderate can be fixed by the Superintending Engineer and Collector beforehand and the table is-

sued to the works and ~~it is~~ the power of altering it given to the Engineer as well as the Collector; but power of fixing the task without reference to the Collector should not be given to the D.P.W.

As to 4. The regulation of wages must obviously be under the Civil officer as the prices are ^{only} known to him.

As to 5. I have above pointed out that it is conducive to efficiency to keep payments under the civil officers.

As to 6. The measuring up of work must obviously be under the officer in charge of the works.

As to 7. Fining must also be under the D.P.W.

As to 8. Water supply may also be left to them to arrange for.

As to 9. Hutting they can also do.

As to 10. Kitchens I think should be under the civil officers.

It involves the constant supply of edibles for which the agency of the village officers is essential and a knowledge of prices etc. which the officer in charge of the work does not possess.

As to 11. This will follow payments. It will in most cases take the form of money payment with the parent's wage.

12, 14 and 15 should all be left to the D.P.W.

13. should be left to the Civil officers.

// As to the position of the Superintending Engineer I confess it seems to me to be a very great waste of power to

Commissioner contends he ought to be.
the division of work such as I sug-
gest is made, there will be plenty of room
for all his energy: but I think it must
be understood that the existing subordina-
tion as laid down in the orders quoted
above should continue. There is no doubt
that for successful famine administration
the district must be the unit. I think his
duties might be defined as in section 37
of the Bombay Code provided that clause (f)
is understood as applying only to standard
tasks. This, with seeing to the part of the
works placed under him, will give him more
than he can do.

In the linked file will be found the
Famine Commissioner's views on the question
of the relation of the Revenue and D.P.W. de-
partments. Col. Campbell's protest was under
the orders of His Excellency sent to the
Board for comment.

8/9/17.

No. 13608 of 10 Sept 1917

Public Works Department.

File by the Secy P.W. D.

I agree with all the Revenue
Secretary has said in his note with
the following exceptions.

The main items connected with
famine relief works are given in
para 4 and he considers that all of
these items should be under the con-
trol of the P.W.D. with the exception
of items 3, 5, 10, 11 and 17.

Item 1. Regulations of wages. I see no
reason why this should not be kept
to the P.W.D. if the prices are fur-
nished to the officers in charge.

Item 2. Payment of wages. For some
time I was inclined to believe that
the system laid down in the Code was
good: but the experience of the late
distress has made me take quite an-
other view of the matter. It is an
impossible position for a Department
to occupy when it is responsible for
expenditure and accounts but has ab-
solutely no control over the persons
making payments. I am shortly sending

side in: No of the Famine Code
The calculation of the wage from the
price is not only and if the wage
is certified it can not be varied
by the officer in charge of the
work in collusion with the paymaster.
The certifying and control of wage
is a very important matter in
which and gives much opportunity
I find it hard the watchful
attention of the Dist. Officer.

11/9/17.

about the Dist. Officer's report in some report on the subject which
the State of things in Kharod will show that it is absolutely ne-
cessary that payments should be in
the hands of those who carry out the
work.
officially arises in
officers let the Revenue P.W. D. 11/9/17.

work and are responsible for the expenditure on it.

10.10. Litchens. I consider these may be under the Revenue Department.

10.11. Doles to children of workers may also be under the Revenue authorities.

10.12. should most certainly be under the Revenue Department.

It will therefore be seen that my opinion is that all the items except 10, 11 and 12 should be under the P.V.D.

As regards tasking I consider that a standard task should be fixed by the Superintending Engineer and Collector beforehand and that the power of altering these tasks should be given to the Executive Engineer and Collector subject to the approval of the Superintending Engineer.

As I do not wish to delay these papers I have written my brief remarks, but I will express my views more fully when answering the Commissioner's note referred to in the concluding para of the Revenue Secretary's note.

C. M. S.
For Secy P.V. Dept.

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Read cno 731307553

G.O (Press) N: 899 of 29th Oct. 1897

The Govt is of opinion that the importance of the question dealt with in the above papers ^{and other important questions} requires that they should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the Famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a Conference of Revenue, P.W. & Medical officers ^{for the purpose} be held under the Presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts. ~~The subjects to be discussed at the conferences need not be confined to the points dealt with in the above~~ ^{proposed} ~~but may embrace all important~~ ~~contested questions of famine~~ ~~policy.~~ The Famine Commr is requested to arrange for the holding of these conferences and ^{to inform Govt. of the arrangements he may make.} ~~submit detailed proposals for the approval of Govt.~~

H.E. The Secy:
Hon. Mr. H. White K.C.S.I.
Hon. Mr. G. C. S.I.

I think the latter part of para. 1 might be altered as above. If the F.C. is to come up to Govt. for sanction before doing anything, it will be Christmas before he begins. Otherwise, Toppens.
A.G.H. 22.10.97

N.B. The Officer will make out a list of points which should be considered by the Conference, in addition to any others that Mr. de Fourn, and Dist Officers may themselves raise. This will help to prevent points being forgotten.

A.G.H. 22.10.97

27/10/97

27/10/97

C9/10/97
A-2/10/97

The attention of the Famine Commission is invited to para 4 of the letter communicated with G 841 d. 5. 10 97 in which the Govt of India desires that proposals for amending or supplementing the Famine Code should not be incorporated in the final Famine Report but should be submitted separately. The historical part of the report should be got ready and submitted to Govt before the close of the calendar year. The proposals of the Famine Commission for amending or supplementing the Code may be submitted later after the holding of the Conference.

The Famine Commission
 Public kept:-
 P.W. kept:-
 9-10-97 }
 Fin. kept:-
 Gen. kept:-
 A.C.
 90/7
 19/10/97
 29/10/97
 17.11.97

Government (1897) of Madras. REVENUE.

Recd.	} 1897.	Enclosures
Regd.		Spare copies

G.O., No. 899, 29th October 1897.

OCTOBER.

Conference.

Directing that a — of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held under the Presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts for the purpose of discussing certain important questions that have arisen during the distress which is now coming to a close.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following letter from T. W. HOLDERNESS, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated 18th August 1897, No. 2794—206-2-F. :—

I am directed to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, a copy of "Notes on the inspection of famine-relief works in the Madras Presidency" by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., the officer deputed to report on famine-relief works in the several provinces in which famine operations are in progress.

2. Mr. Higham's notes show that on the relief works inspected by him in the Madras Presidency the method of tasking the workers is more lenient than that prevailing in other provinces, owing to the deductions made for distance, weakness and excessive tasks, and to the suspension of fines for insufficient work. He also remarks on the extensive powers to grant reductions of tasks and to lower the gang classification exercised in some districts by subordinate officials. In paragraph 33 of the notes, Mr. Higham states that at the time of his visit to the Presidency orders were under issue by the Government of Madras for enforcing greater strictness in these respects, though he had not actually seen them. With your letter No. 661, dated 2nd August 1897, a copy of Madras G.O., No. 616, dated 21st July 1897, has been received, which directs that the fourfold classification of works be reverted to, reduces the gratuitous dole to the amount of the ration allowed to class D relief workers, and cancels the restrictions on fining for short work laid down in paragraph 4 of the G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897. These instructions however do not touch on the subject of reductions of the standard tasks, and the Government of India will be glad to learn how the Government of Madras propose to deal with this matter and also to be favoured with any observations which His Excellency the Governor in Council may wish to make on Mr. Higham's report.

3. In paragraphs 17 and 19 and 26 of the notes it is suggested that the table of standard tasks appended to the Madras Famine Code should be revised. A similar suggestion was made in the last paragraph of my letter, No. 2266, of the 14th June 1897, I am to commend the matter to the attention of the Government of Madras, as on the correctness and practical utility of the standard scale of tasks depends in a large measure in the successful management of relief works.

4. In paragraphs 25—31 of the notes the relations of the officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works with the district revenue authorities are discussed at length, and it is shown that the practice in the Presidency in this respect does not correspond with that of other provinces. The Government of India will be glad to learn the views of the Government of Madras on this very important matter, and they would particularly invite attention to the remark in paragraph 31 of the notes as to the great loss in power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works. They may say on the experience of other provinces that although the civil authorities may be competent to manage relief works on a small scale, a really serious famine, involving provision of work for great masses of people, and throwing heavy and multifarious duties on the district civil authorities, requires the full utilization of the Public Works

Department. They recognize that in the control of relief works the latter department must be required to conform to the special requirements of the Famine Code and to subordinate to these the ordinary departmental methods of conducting work. But they are assured from the experience of other provinces that this can be secured, and that at the same time larger powers can most advantageously be given to the Department of Public Works than appears to be the case in Madras.

ENCLOSURE.

Notes on an Inspection of Famine relief-works in the Madras Presidency by Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., on special duty, Famine Relief Operations.

1. I visited the Madras Presidency after completing my tour in Bombay, the Central Provinces, the North-West Provinces and Bengal, leaving the latter Province on the 4th July by rail from Mokameh, and arriving

Itinerary.

in Bellary on the evening of the 6th. On the following morning I met the Honourable Mr. LeFanu, the Famine Commissioner, who kindly arranged a programme for my tour through the Deccan districts. I did not consider it necessary to visit the Vizagapatam and Ganjam districts, in which the total number of relief workers did not then exceed 60,000, though there were nearly 400,000 in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Anantapur districts.

On the morning of the 8th I left Bellary with Mr. Stuart, the Collector, and Mr. Clerk, the Executive Engineer of the district, for Hala-Harri, 21 miles distant, inspecting on the road two relief charges, comprising together about 9,000 workers. On the following day we went on, through Alur, to Nemakkal, inspecting relief works all along the road; and on the 10th, we went on to Guntakal, which lies just outside the Bellary and within the Anantapur district. At Guntakal I met Mr. Shipley, Collector of Anantapur, and Mr. Romilly, the Executive Engineer; and on the evening of the 10th, we visited together a road work about four miles from Guntakal. On returning to Guntakal I met Mr. deWinton, the Superintending Engineer, and we went on together the following morning by rail to Maddi Khera, in the Kurnool district, where we were met by Mr. Elwin, the Collector, and Mr. Johnstone, the Executive Engineer. After inspecting together some works in the neighbourhood we went on by rail in the night to Belamchera, in the same district, and inspected some road works there on the following morning. In the afternoon I returned with Mr. deWinton to Guntakal, whence we proceeded by rail during the night to Muddanura, in the Cuddapah district, where we arrived early in the morning of the 13th, and were met by Mr. Murray, the Executive Engineer of the Cuddapah district. After inspecting the Muddanura tank work I went on by rail to Madras, where I had an interview on the 14th with the Honourable Mr. Crole, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue and President of the Madras Famine Charitable Fund. On the 15th I returned to Cuddapah, where Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray were awaiting me, and where I met also Mr. Tate, the Collector, and Surgeon-Colonel King, the Sanitary Commissioner, and we inspected together a relief work (road-metalling), two or three miles out of Cuddapah. We left Cuddapah by the night train, Mr. deWinton and Mr. Murray leaving us en route, and Dr. King accompanying me as far as Adoni, where we met Mr. LeFanu on the 16th. I left Adoni and the Madras Presidency early in the morning of the 17th en route for Simla.

2. The relief works in progress in the four districts visited consisted almost entirely of road work, that is, of the earth work required for repairing old roads and making new ones, and the collection and laying of metalling

either on old metalled roads in disrepair or on roads not hitherto metalled. The only other works, with the exception of some town works in Cuddapah were for the construction or clearance of irrigation tanks and channels. The following statement shows the number of different works in progress or immediately about to be started during the second fortnight in June, and the number of labourers employed as reported on the 24th of that month :—

District.	Number of works.		Attendance on 24th June.	
	Road.	Others.	Roads.	Others.
Bellary	25	4	96,751	8,843
Anantapur	33	8	55,328	3,004
Kurnool	36	6	69,659	5,307
Cuddapah	17	11	53,896	27,920
Total	111	29	275,634	45,074

The number of irrigation works was considerable only in Cuddapah, where they included some new channels on the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal. It is said that there is not much opening for tank works in the Deccan, where the rainfall is ordinarily so scanty that tanks would be of little use, the only eligible sites having for the most part been already occupied. If the distress in these tracts continues, all that is proposed is to open more road works, and I was informed that there would be no difficulty in doing this, though it was certain that there would be a great difficulty in subsequently finding funds for the maintenance of the roads to be newly made or metalled.

3. The relief works are so arranged as to be generally within six or seven miles of the affected villages. It is said that the people cannot possibly be induced to leave their villages and reside on the works, though in the absence of any important works, other than road works, the assertion does not appear to have been very fairly tested.

4. I understand that relief works in the Deccan were originally carried out in strict accordance with the provisions of the Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897. The gangs were classified as therein directed, and an attempt was made to enforce the standard tasks laid down in the Code, fines being freely imposed in proportion to the deficiency in the executed tasks and without any minimum wage limit. At the time of my visit, however, this had all been changed, and the works were being conducted in accordance with the later instructions issued in Madras Government G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 30th March 1897, and supplementary directions contained in the Board of Revenue Resolution, No. 278, dated 3rd April 1897.

5. The orders of Government on the subject of the classification of the works, as contained in paragraph 2 of the Government Order quoted above, are to the effect that "all persons seeking employment on relief works should, until further orders, be placed as a rule in class A or class B. The very weak, those who can do only nominal work and who will not resort to kitchens, may, however, be placed in class C." The Board of Revenue in paragraph 2 (d) of their Resolution issued the following direction:—

"The C class of worker is abolished, except for the very weak, who do only nominal work and will not resort to kitchens. This abolishes the D class of relief worker as well."

The orders quoted above were referred by the Government of Madras to the Government of India for approval in their letter No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but the Government of India in their letter No. 2266—116—5—F., dated 14th June 1897, declined to sanction the proposals to place all the very weak who only do nominal tasks in class C instead of in class D, and to place in the B class workers who, being unaccustomed to hard manual labour, were unable to do a B task, and who, under the Famine Code, should be put into class C. The orders of the Government of India had not, however, been communicated to the Collectors at the time of my visit, and when I met the Famine Commissioner at Adoni on the 16th July and mentioned these orders to him, he told me that he had not up till then heard of them.

6. In practice, however, the orders of the Government Order have not been carried out, and the present actual classification may, subject to a few trifling exceptions, be described in a few words; all are in class B. In Bellary and Cuddapah districts I came across special gangs of very weak persons, who were either wholly untasked or given but a nominal task, and found them all in class B. There was no one in class C, and the wages due to this class were only quoted in Bellary as being the rest-day wage. The D wage is also quoted, but merely as the minimum wage below which a worker must on no account be fined, and down to the limit of which he is not to be fined for more than one week continuously. I saw only one work in Anantapur, but understood from the Collector that in that district the orders of the Local Government are more strictly followed, and the weakly gangs are put into C class and receive the C wage. The rest-day wage in this district is paid at the D rate. The practice in Kurnool will be presently described—see paragraphs 11 and 12, *infra*.

As to class A I found in Bellary that men and women employed on ramming, although classed as B, were allowed to receive the A wage, not as a matter of course, but if the ramming were well done to the satisfaction of the Public Works subordinate in charge. This was simply by way of encouraging the rammers to put their backs into the work, but there were no A class workers properly so called. In Kurnool I found one gang which was classed as A, which is referred to in paragraph 12 below, but with an occasional exception of this kind no one is at present put into any class but B. I was unable to obtain any explanation as to why the weakly gangs or the weak members of gangs were placed in this class, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the Government Order already referred to.

7. We have next to consider the method of tasking the gangs. The entries in the gang register show in separate columns for each gang the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers (with whom are included women in an advanced stage of pregnancy), other women, and finally children under 12. Boy adults, or boys between the ages of 12 and 16, are shown separately, because, although under the Madras Code such boys are entitled to the pay of adults, they are more lightly tasked, in accordance with paragraph 3 (1) of the Government Order already referred to. The system is to reduce all the members of the gang to their equivalents in child-units, which is the unit of tasking. Thus:—

A man is taken as four units.	
A boy adult	3 or 4 units.
A nursing mother	1½ "
Other women, including girls, from 12 to 16	2 "
Children under 12	1 unit.

On the basis of these equivalents the strength of the gang is then expressed in a separate column in the register in terms of child-units, and normally the number of such units multiplied by the task per child-unit (*vide* Form F, page 66, Madras Famine Code) should give the task for the gang. It is obvious that if A, B and C classes were recognised, the registers would have to exhibit the number of men, boy adults, nursing mothers, other women and children under each class, each having its appropriate equivalent. This would greatly complicate the form, but the difficulty is at present avoided, because all workers (even those that do but a nominal task) are now put into the single class B.

8. In practice, however, the task for the gang is not that obtained by the normal calculation referred to above. Before the task for the day is finally fixed certain reductions have to be made, in accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the Government Order of March last. A copy of this Government Order was forwarded to the Government of India for information with Madras Government letter, No. 296, dated 4th May 1897, but specific approval of their instructions in regard to the reduction of tasks was not applied for, as the regulation of tasks is of course a matter entirely within the control of the Local Government. I propose to show, however, how these instructions have worked in practice, and it will be convenient to consider them in the reverse of the order in which they appear in the Government Order under reference.

9. Beginning then with the order relating to reduction of tasks on account of distance (paragraph 3 (iv) of the Government Order), it may be remarked that in no work visited by me had much shelter been provided for the labourers at or near the works, and I was told that the people could not be induced to leave their homes for the night, and preferred walking to and from their villages night and morning, even when these were as many as seven miles away. This is hardly to be wondered at when such liberal allowance is made for the work performed in the journey, a walk of 2½ miles being regarded as the equivalent of an hour's work. The time allowed for walking to and from a village a mile from the works is thus 48 minutes, or exactly one-tenth of a working day of eight hours. After the column showing the number of child-units in the gang register, there is therefore a column showing the reduction to be made for distance, in which is entered a fraction of which the denominator is 10, and the numerator the average distance in miles from the work of the villages from which the members of the gang have come. When the work is close up to the doors of the village no deduction is made, but in such a case the whole village of course turns out to the work. But for a village a mile distant, a deduction of 10 per cent. is made from the number of units before striking the task, and so in proportion for greater distances. Deductions of 50 per cent. on this account are common enough, and in some registers I saw deductions of 70 per cent.

This practice, whatever its justification, opens of course another door for fraud. The distances are probably very roughly and liberally calculated, the benefit of any doubt being given to the gang. Thus on the 19th July we mustered a gang of 107 individuals (No. 40) for which a deduction of 30 per cent. had been made for distance, and the Collector discovered that 18 of the members had come from a village alongside the work. It may be added that, although in all provinces, except Bombay (where the labourers at present all reside on the works), the majority of the labourers come every morning from villages as far distant from the works as those in the Deccan, it is only in Madras that any deduction from the task is made on this account.

Weakness reductions.

Weakness deductions in Kurnool district.

Weakness deductions in Kurnool continued.

* The term Divisional officer in Madras refers to a Revenue officer, with the powers of an Assistant Collector, and not as in many parts of India to the Executive Engineer of a Public Works Division.

As regards the 21 gangs actually employed on earthwork I find that deductions from the full task, varying from 40 to 70 per cent. and averaging about 50 per cent., were made on account of distance, and that further deductions, varying from 20 to 30 per cent., were made for "other causes" which are not specified. These could hardly have included "weakness" with 18 per cent. of the units drafted to weakly gangs, and were probably on account of time spent in reorganizing the gangs, as there is a note on the form that this had been in progress during half the day. The full task per digger had been fixed at 80 cubic feet per diem, but after reductions from all causes the average task actually set was less than 21 cubic feet, and the work of the carriers was lightened in proportion. At this rate the cost of the earthwork, including allowance for the rest-day wage, would work out to Rs. 53 per thousand cubic feet, though the normal cost would probably not have exceeded Rs. 6.

14. I now come to the case of deductions made on account of "excessive tasks" and will again quote the Government Order, paragraph 3 (ii)—

Deductions for excessive tasks.

(ii) "Excessive tasks.—When the task prescribed appears to be excessive, the case should be met by a reduction of the task under section 107, not by reducing the class of the gang under section 97. A similar reduction should be made when gangs turn out short work owing to the absence of tools, or to inexperience in the handling of tools. It is well to point out here that "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional Officers,* and that the "Engineer Officer in charge" means the "Overseer in charge."

An instance of the way in which this order has worked in practice came to my notice when at Belamchera on the 13th July. I found that the tasks for some gangs employed on breaking metal was 0·8 cubic feet of metalling per child-unit per diem. This appeared to me to be a very low task, especially as I had found a task of 1·75 cubic feet, or more than double, on the road work inspected on the 10th in Anantapur district. According to the district task tables the correct task would have been 1·3 cubic feet. On enquiry it appeared that the task originally set had been 1·3 cubic feet, but that it was subsequently reduced (previously to the issue of the new Government Order), to 1·1 cubic feet for some reason that has not been placed on record. The register showed that this task had been pretty regularly accomplished, though fines had occasionally been recorded. Then came the Government Order of March last, which was circulated by the Collector early in May, and under which fining practically ceased as will be presently shown. Since then the task has been twice reduced, first to 0·9 and then to 0·8 cubic feet, under the authority of Mr. Ghose, the Divisional Officer.

Mr. Ghose, who was present, informed me that the Overseer in charge had represented to him that it was quite impossible for him to get the full task out of the workers, and that they must either be fined, or the task reduced, and he had therefore authorized their reduction, under the authority given to him by the order quoted. I asked him if he himself considered the task short, and he said he could not set aside the Overseer's statement, though the Collector and I found on examining the register that the first falling off in the outturn when the task was 1·1 cubic feet did not occur until the practice of fining had ceased, that the reduced task of 0·9 cubic feet had been done without difficulty when first set, the outturn subsequently falling without satisfactory reason being forthcoming. At the time of our visit the task of 0·8 cubic feet, which was also carried out for some days, was no longer worked up to, the task on the 11th being 17 per cent. deficient, and but for the visit the task would probably by this time have been reduced to 0·7 cubic feet or lower. Mr. Ghose himself admitted that he had in March last got a task of 1·3 cubic feet out of a gang at Alupur, although no deductions whatever had there been made on account of weakness or distance, as in the case of the gangs at Belamchera, and if he had more carefully examined the register I do not think he could possibly have approved such gratuitous reductions.

15. Mr. Ghose told us that he had personally authorised reductions of the task on two Reduction of tasks by Overseers in charge under general sanction of the Divisional Officer. works, and that indeed he had only visited two works since the issue of the Government Order. But I have since seen a copy of a Circular No. 439, dated 11th May 1897, issued by him as Divisional Officer direct to all the Overseers in charge of relief works within his division, explaining in greater detail the Government Orders of March last. A copy of this Circular to which I must again presently refer is appended, but paragraph 4 may here be quoted *in extenso*—

"(4) From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinized to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task."

The words in italics are mine. The Overseers to whom this Circular was addressed are Upper Subordinates in the Public Works Department, and they have been given *carte-blanc* to reduce the tasks at pleasure, without any reference whatever to the Sub-divisional or Divisional Public Works Officers, who are their departmental superiors, but who have themselves no power whatever to increase or reduce a task, except with the sanction of the Collector. It will thus be seen that tasks can be reduced by Hospital Assistants and Overseers in charge, in some cases with and in others without the approval of the Revenue Divisional Officers until they are whittled away to almost nothing.

* See footnote on paragraph 10.

16. Having thus described the actual practice which has sprung up, under the Government Order of March last, in connection with the reduction of tasks I proceed to the question of fines. I understand that when the works were first started, fining without any reference to a minimum wage was rigorously enforced, even although representations had been made by some of the Public Works Officers that the standard tasks of the Code were in some cases excessive. The latest rule in the subject is contained in paragraph 4 of the Government Order as below:—

"(4) *Fining*.—Finning should be resorted to only in clear cases of malingering or of insubordination; and even then not so as to reduce the wage below that of the D class, nor for more than one week continuously, without the special permission of the Divisional Officer."

This rule, read as it must be, with the instructions for reduction of tasks in paragraph 3 of the Government Order and with other Resolutions of the Board of Revenue has rightly or wrongly been taken to prohibit the fining of a gang for short work, and to restrict the practice to cases of individuals, who have been clearly guilty of malingering or insubordination. This is clearly shown in paragraph 7 of the Circular by a Divisional Officer referred to in the preceding paragraph. As a result the practice of fining has ceased almost entirely, and the Overseers in charge are afraid to fine. They prefer to meet short work by reduction of task, with the inevitable result that the successive reductions become necessary. On one work I found a case in which a small fine had been imposed, but only the day before, and the Assistant Engineer at Belamchera told me that he had recently ordered a fine for very short work. But beyond this I could get no trace of a fine, and was told by both Civil and Public Works Officers that the practice had ceased. Apart from the unwillingness of the subordinates in charge to show fines in their accounts, it must be admitted that the tasks after all deductions have been made are so low that the gangs can hardly help completing them.

17. I have now shown how the full task of a gang is determined, and the reductions which are in practice made. It remains to consider the task tables in which the normal task per child-unit is given.

A table of standard tasks has been given in Form F, Appendix III, of the Madras Famine Code, but it is difficult to criticise it, because the data on which it is based have not been given, and for the same reason it is difficult to say what modifications should be made in the tabular tasks when the constitution of a gang differs widely from that assumed. The table is not in a practical form, or it would show separately, as do the tables of other Codes, the tasks for diggers and carriers. Subsidiary task tables have been prepared in each district by the Executive Engineer, which are in greater detail, but have the same defect, in not distinguishing between the task of the digger and the carrier, or in road metalling between the carrier and the breaker. The following is a comparison as far as is possible of the tasks set forth in these district tables, with the standard table of the Code:—

Nature of task.		Code standard.	Bellary.	Kurnool.	Cuddapah.
Earthwork.		CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.	CUB. FT.
Sandy loam.	Lead up 60 feet. Lift to 6 feet	11·85	9·00	9·00	6·5 (a)
Black cotton soil	do. do.	10·95	7·50	7·70	5·88 (a)
Gravelly soil, hard		10·13	6·0	4·70	4·50 (a)
Metalling.					
Stone easily procurable and broken.					
Lead—					
0—300 feet		1·88	1·7	1·7	1·7
3—4 furlongs		..	0·6	0·8	0·6
Stone easily procured, but hard to break—					
0—300 feet		..	1·2	1·3	1·2
3—4 furlongs		..	0·5	0·6	0·5
Stone hard to procure and break—					
0—300 feet		..	0·8	0·8	0·8
3—4 furlongs		..	0·3	0·4	0·3

(a) The Cuddapah earthwork rates are for a lead up to 150 feet. The tasks given are for a child-unit of B class.

It will be seen that the Code standard tasks are higher than those now enforced, which agree *inter se* pretty fairly. From several notes taken on the works, I am inclined to think that the standard tasks are too high, but that the district tasks are too low; but without actual experience of the working capacity of the Deccan cooly it is difficult to speak with confidence.

I noted many cases, however, in which a much higher task per unit might have been attained, if more attention had been paid to the distribution of diggers or breakers and carriers. As a general rule the carriers were very under-tasked, often doing only 50 per cent. of a fair task. In some cases this is unavoidable, but it was not so in the cases noticed. This was of course the fault of the Overseer in charge, but if the task tables were drawn up on a sounder principle, not only could a far higher task per unit be realized, but the men in charge would be greatly assisted in making the most advantageous disposition of the workers.

18. It is difficult to say what proportion the amount paid as wages bears to the value of the work done. The accounts are not kept in a manner in which this can be shown readily and without difficulty. I obtained, however, certain registers taken at random in the Bellary district from which the following results have been abstracted relating to the breaking of road metal:—

Number of gangs.	Number of workers.	Percentage of deductions.	Task performed.	Amount paid in wages.	Rate per 100 cubic feet.	Normal value of work done at 3-12 per cent.	Remarks.
16 7 20	Not noted.	Not noted.	CUB. FT. 1,329 258 790	RS. 139 45 147	10 17 18-12	RS.	
			2,377	431	18	89	11-seer basis.
14 31	428 1,049	56 56	2,377 80 296	539 42 103	22-11 42-6 34-12	89	8-75 seers. Do. Do.
			2,763	684	35-6	104	

Reducing all results to the basis of 8-75 seers to the rupee, the cost of wages was thus more than six times of that of the normal value of work done. For a basis of 11 seers it would have been a little more than five times.

It may be noted that the gangs on the last two lines of the table consisted entirely of women and a very few children. The men are so few in number that they are usually employed on earthwork or consolidation, and in many cases metalling has been collected simply for the purpose of finding employment for the women.

To the rates given above, one-seventh should be added to allow for the rest-day wage. It would be one-sixth if full rates were paid on the rest-day, but the rate paid is either the C or D wage. Something should be added to for the cost of feeding dependants in the kitchen, but this is not charged direct to the work, and the amounts are not recorded. Probably 5 per cent. would be a sufficient addition on this account.

As regards earthwork I have already noted in paragraph 13 a case in which the cost of earthwork was Rs. 53 per 1,000 cubic feet, but this was no doubt an extreme case. I have notes of two other cases in which the rates were Rs. 27-2-0 and Rs. 16-5-0, excluding rest-day wage, the deductions for all causes amounting to 60 per cent. in each case. The normal rates are said to have been Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 respectively, and if this is correct the working rates are reasonable, when allowance is made for the deductions. But the normal rates appear to have been overstated. The lead and lift are not given for the Rs. 7 rate, but in the case of the Rs. 5 rate the lead is recorded as 25 and the lift as 2. It is not certain whether the unit here is the foot or the yard (both are used in Madras), but even if it be the latter Rs. 5 would be a very high rate.

19. In connection with the Madras task tables it should be mentioned that they are based on the assumption that a woman will do twice the work of a child and a man four times. In the Bombay Code it is assumed that the work done by man, woman and child will be in the proportions 3, 2 and 1, and this is, I think, more in accordance with general experience. It was often observed to me that a woman would do as much work as a man at metal-breaking, and it may safely be assumed that either at this work or carrying a woman will do not less than two-thirds of a man's task. If the child-unit is correct, the man's task in Madras is therefore too high, but it may be that the tasks were originally worked out for men, and reduced to the child-unit, by dividing by 4. In this case the tasks for women and children are too light. In practice, however, very few men are employed either in metal-breaking or in carrying, but one difficulty in applying the Madras task tables lies in this questionable assumption that the ordinary famine male labourer can do twice as much work as a female.

Proportion of man's to child's task.

20. Each relief work is nominally under the charge of an Upper Subordinate of the Public Works Department. When the charge is a large one he has a Lower Subordinate under him to look after the measurements, &c., and Management of relief works and system of payment.

In some cases the Upper Subordinate has charge of two camps, with a Lower Subordinate at each as an assistant. He is responsible for all miscellaneous expenditure, but has nothing whatever to do with the payment of labour. For this purpose an imprest is given by the Executive Engineer to the Tahsildar who supplies under cover of it the necessary cash to a paymaster who is appointed by the Collector. The muster rolls or pay sheets are made over to this official, whose time is mainly occupied in paying the gangs. The rates of payment to be entered in these pay sheets is intimated from time to time to the subordinate in charge by the Tahsildar. In the Kurnool district these rates are based, not on the market rate of the "grain equivalent," but on the market one of all the items in the annual return of the Code. I did not ascertain the practice in this respect in other districts, but believe that it is left to the discretion of the Collector to adopt either alternative. Payments are supposed to be made twice a week, but I was told that there are frequently delays, owing to the paymaster not being kept in funds or in small coin by the Tahsildar, to his not being able to get through his work, or to delay in the submission of the pay sheets by the subordinate in charge. The Public Works Department is responsible only for delay due to the last of these causes.

Referring again to the circular by the Assistant Collector in Kurnool appended to these notes, it will be seen that in paragraph 7 thereof strict orders were issued to paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs, and that fines on individuals were to be enforced only when the Overseer had distinctly entered in the remarks column that the individual concerned had been found to be malingering or insubordinate. On a representation by the Executive Engineer, the Collector subsequently modified this order in his Circular No. 218, dated 30th June 1897, so far as it prohibited the fining of the whole gangs for malingering or insubordination; but he insisted, as he was of course justified in doing, that the reason for the fine should be clearly indicated on the pay sheet by certain distinguishing letters. To this there can be no objection, but the practice of giving a paymaster any discretion in enforcing fines imposed by the officer in charge of the works is certainly open to objection.

The system of making all payments by means of a subordinate in the Civil departments on works in charge of the Public Works Department has been extolled to me as an excellent safeguard against jobbery. The principle of exciting friction and jealousies between subordinate officials does not commend itself to me as an efficient safeguard against collusion that may be substituted for the more direct checks exercised elsewhere, and as long as reliance is placed on these jealousies, there is always the danger that they may be simulated wherever collusion is most rampant. I will reserve further remarks on this subject, however, for my final report.

21. Piece-work has not been introduced in the Deccan, but I was informed by Mr. Crole that the Government had just sanctioned its introduction in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, where the local officers had made out a very strong case. It was said that the people there were very anxious to be given piece-work, though they could not be induced to attend works conducted on the task work system. The proposal was at first objected to by the Board of Revenue as contrary to the Famine Code, but it is satisfactory to know that a fair trial is now to be given to it.

Piece-work.

22. The number of dependants on works is much smaller in proportion to the number of workers than in other provinces. The weekly returns show no dependants at all before the week ending 6th March, when they amounted to 3,439 against 51,272 workers, or less than 7 per cent. For the week ending 17th July the number was 19,011 against 442,893 workers, or little over 4 per cent. Even these numbers include some who are not dependants of the workers, as in many cases the kitchens are placed near a large village and persons are fed there who have no direct connection with the works. About 95 per cent. of the dependants are children. Cash payments are almost unknown, but a cooked ration is distributed. The ration for adults consists of a cake of cholam, or mixed cholam and ragi, containing 25 tolas or 10 ounces of grain, served with a sauce formed of the other items detailed in section 122 of the Code. This ration is given morning and evening, so that an adult receives 20 ounces of raw grain a day. Children receive on an average half this amount, that is, a ten-ounce cake is made up morning and evening for every two children on the roll. In practice the smaller children get less than half and the bigger ones more than half a cake. I found in many kitchens that many, both of the adults and children, were unable to eat more than their ration when offered them out of the surplus, and Mr. Stuart, Collector of Bellary, told me that he often made this experiment, and found a great many refused any additional ration.

Dependants and kitchens.

It has recently been pointed out by the Government of India that the Madras ration for dependants and others in receipt of gratuitous relief is excessive, the allowance of grain in

other Codes being 16 ounces only for adult. In Bombay children receive only 6 ounces. Dr. King, with whom I discussed this point, remarked that the Bombay ration is expressed in terms of flour and not of raw grain, and that, when allowance is made for this, the Bombay ration expressed in grain could be increased by 10 per cent. He also observed that the Bombay ration allows half an ounce of ghee for adults and quarter of an ounce for small children among "other items," and I understood him to say that, if the Bombay scale were accepted in its entirety, it would not be inferior to the present Madras allowance. It may be noted, however, that the minimum flour allowance for an adult female in Bombay is only 14 ounces.

The kitchens on the works are entirely under the control of the Collector, by whom a Superintendent is appointed. The Overseer in charge and the Public Works Department have nothing whatever to do with the management of the kitchens, nor does the expenditure incurred on them appear in the Public Works accounts.

In considering the high wages paid to workers in this Presidency, the fact that the proportion of dependants is so low must be taken into account, as in other provinces it varies from about 10 to 25 per cent. It is said that only the lowest castes can be induced to send their children to kitchens, and that they are very unpopular. This has been the experience at first in all other provinces, but where kitchens are well managed, I think the prejudice against them has gradually given way, and if non-working children are to be relieved at all, kitchens are doubtless preferable to a cash wage.

23. I asked Mr. LeFanu if there had been any complaints from private employers that

Interference with the supply of labour to private employers.

the relief works interfered with the supply of labour. He mentioned three cases in which such complaints had been received from small employers, and said that it was found in each case that the wages offered by the employer were about the same as, or not more than a pice higher than the wage earned on the works, but that the latter was preferred, because private employers would not pay anything to the weaker members of the family or to dependants. In all these cases he had offered to send as many labourers as required, and to allow the weak members and dependants to remain on the works, but when the offer was made it was said that the men were no longer required. The only other complaint that Mr. LeFanu could remember was one from the Railway Office at Vizagapatam to the effect that relief works were preventing labour from coming to the railway works, but enquiry showed that there are no relief works within 13 miles, while the local labour was at the time receiving extravagant wages of from 6 to 8 annas a day in collecting grass for private persons, and would on this account not be likely to go to the railway.

24. As far as I could ascertain there are no relief works of any importance conducted wholly by the Civil Officers. At first a few

Relief works in charge of Civil Officers.

works were started under the supervision of the Local Fund Engineers, but they were eventually made over to the officers of the Public Works Department.

25. It is, however, hardly correct to say that the relief works are under the control of the Public Works officers, except as regards

Subordination of Public Works to Civil Officers.

matters of purely technical detail, or even that these officers have any control over their own subordinates, who are in charge of or employed on the relief works. These men have to take their orders from many masters—the Collector, the Assistant or Deputy Collector, the Tahsildar or his Assistant, the Civil Surgeon of the District, and even, as shown above in paragraph 12, from the Hospital Assistant engaged on the works; and they are responsible to their own departmental superior only for the safe custody of the tools and plant, the submission of certain daily returns, copies of which have also to go to the Revenue Divisional officers, and for work being outturned in accordance with the specification. They are allowed to propose reductions of task to the Revenue Divisional officer, and, as has been shown, in some cases to reduce them of their own accord under cover of a general sanction to that effect; but it is useless for them to recommend any reductions to their own superior officer in the Public Works Department, who has no authority whatever to modify the tasks, except after a reference to the Collector. Nor are these men, although in charge of the work, in any way responsible for the payments to the labourers, which are made by an independent official belonging to the Civil Department, and advisedly removed entirely from their control. Their whole sense of responsibility is weakened by the uncertainty as to whom they are responsible to, or as to who are responsible to them.

The Executive and Assistant Engineers are in no better position. They are out of order if they attempt to give any orders on the work relating to tasks or fines, though such orders may be freely given by others who have had no experience whatever in the organisation of large bodies of labourers. They too have to serve two masters, to take their orders from the Collector on all points not strictly professional, and from their departmental superiors on all other points, it being left to every one to interpret in his own way what is meant by "strictly professional."

26. The position of the Superintending Engineer is still more anomalous. If there is one officer more than any other upon whom Government might rely to control relief works in simultaneous progress in several districts,

The position of the Superintending Engineer.

to assign to each officer and subordinate in the Public Works Department his proper duties and place in the chain of responsibility, to introduce uniformity where uniformity is desirable, and to sanction variation where circumstances demand variation, it is the Superintending Engineer. In Madras, however, the Superintending Engineer is allowed no voice in these matters. Take for instance the question of tasking. I have already stated that the task table of the Code is not in my opinion based on sound and workable principles and it might be considered the first duty of a Superintending Engineer to rectify this. I find that, as long ago as last March, the Superintending Engineer attempted to do this, as regards earth-work, on the occasion of a large work being started in the Cuddapah district, and to introduce the system of tasking the diggers which is in force in every other province that I have visited. He sent detailed instructions on this and other matters connected with the work to the Executive Engineer, who sent them on to the Collector for approval of the non-professional points involved. The Collector forwarded the proposals to the Board of Revenue for orders after expressing his own personal approval. The orders of the Board are contained in Resolution No. 415-A., dated 13th June 1897. In this resolution the merits of the system proposed were admitted, and it was acknowledged that Government in paragraph 3 (i) of G.O., No. 216 of 1897, had recognised the necessity of fixing the task according to the number of diggers and not according to the total number in the gang. But it was objected that it was impossible to carry out the system proposed, and undesirable to add to the complexity of the existing rules for the conduct of works by introducing the proposed system. The Board concluded by observing "that the Superintending Engineer issued orders to the Executive Engineer to introduce a system totally at variance with the provisions of the Famine Code, without consulting the Collector, although the proposed system involved several points of a non-professional nature." The Board was "glad to note, however, that the Executive Engineer thought fit to consult the Collector in the matter."

I am not concerned here to answer the Board's objection to the introduction of the better system of tasking, which has been adopted without any difficulty whatever in every other province in which relief works are in progress. It is sufficient to point out how this effort of the Superintending Engineer to introduce an improved system was met by something very like censure. Other instances of this have come to my notice, but it is unnecessary to adduce them here.

The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all control of his own Public Works staff, except in "technical matters," has been emphatically asserted in paragraph 9 of the Government Order of March last, in which it is even directed that the details of the Public Works establishment should be seen and passed by the Collectors before they are sent up to the Board or Government for sanction. The control of the Superintending Engineer is practically confined to such matters as the section to be adopted for a tank embankment, or the size of the ring through which broken metal is to pass.

27. It may be said that the position to which the officers of the Public Works Department

Rules of the Famine Codes on the relation of Public Works to Civil Officers.

are relegated is in accordance with that assigned to them in section 24 of the Madras Code, and that the duties of a Superintending Engineer in time of famine are merely those which are recited in section 42. I do not propose to consider here the language of section 24 of the Code, but will merely observe that it is

* Bombay, sections 31 (d) and (e) and section 38.
Bengal, section 22.
North-West Provinces, section 27.
Punjab, section 49.

repeated almost word for word in the corresponding sections of the Codes of other provinces,* excepting Burma and the Central Provinces. But notwithstanding this in all these other provinces, the Superintending Engineer, acting in direct communication with the Commissioner, is in practice the officer who controls the organization and management of all relief works which have been made over to the Public Works Department. In Bombay his duties are already laid down in section 37, and whatever doubts there may be as to the position of other Public Works officers under sections 31 and 38, his authority in respect of all the matters referred to in section 37 is unquestioned. In Bengal the responsibilities of the Superintending Engineer, as far as the Code is concerned, are limited to the matters stated in section 93, corresponding very closely to section 42 of the Madras Code. But in practice two superintendents of works, with the powers of Superintending Engineers as defined in the Public Works Code, have been specially appointed for the control of the relief works under the Public Works Department, and the Chief Engineer himself has devoted the closest attention to the all-important question of tasking and has drawn up the admirable and helpful instructions on the subject which have been issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department for the general guidance of all officers engaged on relief works. In the North-West Provinces the duties of the officers of the Public Works Department are laid down in sections 30 to 40 of the Famine Code, and as there defined are

not more extensive than in the Madras and Bengal Codes, but in actual practice the whole of that important section of famine policy which relates to relief works has been formulated and controlled in the Public Works Department, the Chief and Superintending Engineers have been consulted by the Local Government at every stage, and a generous and real authority has been accorded to them, which has been exercised in close and harmonious co-operation with the Civil officers.

In the Punjab the duties of Superintending Engineers have been defined in section 56 of the Code, which corresponds very closely with section 37 of the Bombay Code. When relief operations were first started, it was proposed by the Chief Engineer himself that the duties of the Public Works staff should be confined to purely professional matters, but it was soon found that this was not practicable, and when work was started in the Ghaggar canal, it was decided by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, on the unanimous representation of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, that the whole of the arrangements should be under the direct control of the Superintending Engineer, for reasons recorded in paragraph 3 of Sir Dennis FitzPatrick's note on the Ghaggar canals relief works, dated 13th January 1897. I have received a communication from the Deputy Commissioner of Hissar, from which I infer that this decision has had the happiest results.

28. It will thus be seen that in the four provinces in which the position of the Public Works officers in relation to the Collector is defined

Interpretation of terms "Technical" and "Professional."

in language identical with that of section 24 of the Madras Code, and in which the results attained on relief works certainly do not compare unfavourably with those accomplished in Madras, a very much wider authority has been accorded to the Superintending Engineer than is allowed in the latter province. The explanation of this is that in all other provinces a wider interpretation has been given to the words "*matters which are not of a merely technical nature*" and "*points strictly professional*." If there is one matter that may be deemed professional, it is the organization and management of large bodies of more or less untrained labourers with what is often a wholly untrained subordinate staff; if there is one matter which is merely technical, it is the proportioning of tasks under varying conditions, and in variously constituted gangs to the capacity of the gang or the individual worker. My tour has given me exceptional opportunities for appreciating the difficulties which attend the management of large relief works on the principles laid down in the Code, and I can conceive no task which more severely taxes the capacities and energies of the best Engineer.

29. In one respect the action which has been taken by the Madras Government is justified

Power given in Madras to the Collector and his Divisional officers in regard to tasks.

by positive enactment of the Famine Code which appears to be peculiar to Madras. In section 107 it is laid down that modifications in the standard task may be made by the Engineer officer in charge of the work, subject to the sanction of the Collector. This is an amplification of the more general direction that the Collector's decision shall be accepted in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers which is not to be found in the Codes of other provinces in which this direction is contained. In section 37 (f) of the Bombay Code, the Superintending Engineer is required "to maintain an equal standard of tasks and uniformity of procedure in setting tasks for the various kinds of work," and there is a similar provision in section 56 (e) of the Punjab Code.

In Bengal the rules for tasks are set forth in sections 64 to 66, the language of which implies that the tasks are to be determined by the local officers, though, as before stated, detailed instructions for their guidance have been drawn up by the Chief Engineer, and issued by the Local Government in the Public Works Department. In the North-West Provinces the same practice obtains.

It may be added that under paragraph 3 (ii) of the Madras G.O., No. 216, Revenue, dated 10th March 1897, it has been lately ruled that the word "Collector" in section 107 includes Divisional officers, and that the "Engineer officer in charge" means the Overseer in charge. The practical effect of this ruling has been shown in paragraphs 14 and 15 of these notes.

30. It need hardly be said that the relations between the Civil and Public Works officers

Friction engendered by the present regulations.

in this province are very strained, and in a state of high tension all along the line. The friction that exists is very detrimental.

I have heard both sides, and have come to the conclusion not that there are faults in both sides, but that both are in the right. As long as the sole responsibility for the management of relief works is vested by the express enactment of Government in the Civil officers, those officers cannot but resent the interference of officers of other departments. As long as the officers of a specially trained and independent department are called in to assist in the management of such works, they cannot but resent the ignoring of their authority in matters which they rightly deem to be of a professional nature, and the loosening of all the bonds of departmental organization and discipline. It is an unfortunate but natural result of the existing regulations that

the friction excited is greatest between those officers who are the most capable and energetic, and who take the most serious view of their own individual duties and responsibilities.

31. During the interview that I had with the Famine Commissioner on the 16th, I

Views of the Famine Commissioner on the relation of the two departments.

expressed surprise at the great loss of power involved in the limited authority assigned to the Public Works Department in the control and management of relief works, whereby very heavy duties and responsibilities were thrown on the Civil officers in addition to those incidental to other sections of famine administration, such as village relief, agricultural advances, the distribution of the charitable fund, &c., &c. He told me in reply that this had been done advisedly, and he mentioned instances in previous famines in which particular members of the Public Works Department had shown themselves very hard and unsympathetic in the management of relief works. I venture to think, however, that, if the management of relief works were more distinctly recognized as a special function of the Public Works Department, the idiosyncrasies of its individual members would be better controlled by their own departmental superiors than by officers of other departments. It is the particular business of Engineers to adopt means to ends, and if the principles that should guide them in the management of relief works were set forth in all necessary detail by the head of their own department, and adhesion to their principles were enforced by the usual methods of departmental discipline, I see no reason why relief works in Madras should not be as efficiently and sympathetically managed by the officers of the Public Works Department as they have been in other provinces. As far as I could ascertain, the work of the Public Works Department, as a department of Government, has been confined to the preparation of estimates, the provision of funds, and the supply of the necessary tools and plant.

32. The Public Works Department has hitherto supplied all the Engineer officers required in connection with relief works. This has been done by drafting officers from unaffected districts, in which ordinary operations has been as far as possible contracted, but if distress should extend to other districts, there will probably be some difficulty in providing officers. Upper subordinates have also been freely transferred from other districts, and others who are entertained by Local Funds have also been posted to relief works, but it has been necessary in addition to employ a few temporary men who have done fairly well. The greatest difficulty has been experienced in regard to sub-overseers and head maistris. Most of these have been entertained temporarily, but the supply of competent men was not equal to the demand.

Concluding remarks.

33. The distinctive features of the administration of relief works in Madras are as follows:—

- All workers are put in the B class and receive the B wage, including even those who can perform only a nominal task, except in Anantapur, where they are put in the C class. A few workers receive the A wage, but the number is insignificant. Dependants also receive a larger ration than in other provinces.
- The large reductions made in normal tasks on account of distance, weakness, or incapacity, and the almost total suspension of the practice of fining.
- The exclusion of the Superintending Engineer from all effective control over the management of relief works, and especially over the system of tasking.

The orders of the Government of India have already been passed on (a), and I have nothing to add to the remarks already made in regard to (c).

As regards (b), Mr. LeFanu informed me that the proposals for reduction of tasks, etc., to which effect was given by G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, were originally made by him in view of the great heat to which the labourers in the Deccan would be exposed during the months of April and May, or until the setting in of the monsoon winds.

He had subsequently proposed that these orders should be modified in the direction of greater stringency as soon as the monsoon sets in. I have seen a Government Order of the Madras Government in this sense, in which it was proposed to increase all tasks by 25 per cent. and give smaller reductions on account of distance after the monsoon had commenced, and officers were warned to be prepared for telegraphic instructions to this effect. I understood from Mr. LeFanu when I met him on the 16th that these instructions had just issued, although I have not seen a copy of them. It may therefore be hoped that fuller tasks may be exacted in future.

The numbers on relief works, including dependants, have increased from 166,723 for the week ending 1st May (when the effects of the Government Order of March last would probably have become appreciable), to 461,904 for the week ending 17th July. It is impossible to say how much of the increase has been due to the great reductions in task, which in many cases have become almost nominal, and how much to the failure of the monsoon and extension of the distressed area.

The large proportion of women and children to men on the Madras relief works, and the fact that the majority of the works are road work, have no doubt increased the difficulty in keeping the workers fully employed and in setting a fairly high task. In this connection it must

be remembered that in the Madras returns boys between the age of 12 and 16 are included among the men, and that women include girls of the same age, so that under *children* only those under twelve years of age are shown. In other provinces boys and girls between the age of 12 or 16 are shown as children.

The numbers of individuals receiving gratuitous relief, including dependants on the works, have hitherto been less in Madras than in other provinces, excepting Bombay and the Punjab. The following are the figures for the week ending 17th July :—

Provinces.	Number of workers.	Dependants on works.	Gratuitous and special relief.	Total columns 3 and 4.	Percentage of column 5 on column 2.
Madras	442,893	19,011	209,202	228,213	51.5
Bombay	245,982	61,821	50,989	112,810	45.9
Bengal	258,172	14,239	449,061	463,300	179.5
North-West Provinces and Oudh	428,255	80,815	452,280	533,095	124.5
Punjab	65,156	7,809	13,308	21,117	32.4
Central Provinces	340,104	52,762	160,254	213,016	62.7

The low proportion of dependants and the unpopularity of the kitchens has already been referred to in paragraph 22.

DATED SIMLA,
28th July 1897.

T. HIGHAM.

APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR.

Tour Dis. No. 489 of 1897.

The following circular is issued to Overseers in charge of relief works in this Division.

2. Government has in its order No. 216, dated the 30th March 1897, laid down fresh rules for the management of relief works, and these must be acted up to by every Overseer, and for that purpose the accompanying extract of paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 is communicated to them for their guidance.

3. They will observe that the work to be given to the different gangs must be suited to their composition, and this is clearly shown by examples in sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 3.

From the second portion of the same sub-paragraph, it is clear that Government intends that one man should be equivalent to two women and equivalent to four children. No allowance is apparently to be made for nursing mothers or girls who must be strictly considered to be capable of turning out two units of work.

The only exception made is in favour of boys between 12 and 16 who are to be reckoned as two or three units according to their capacity, but are to be paid the full wages of a man.

4. From sub-paragraph (ii) of the Government Order, it appears that the intention of Government is to regulate and adjust the task by decreasing it and increasing it till an exact task which a gang can turn out regularly has been ascertained. In doing this, Overseers should not change the class of the gang, but alter the unit of task. This requires the sanction of the undersigned, but as he cannot always be on the spot to accord the necessary action, a general sanction is hereby accorded, and they are informed that their daily work sheets will be carefully scrutinised to guard against any abuse of it. The undersigned hopes to see that before long with a careful working of this system, every gang will be able to turn out its allotted task.

5. Sub-paragraph (iii) provides for the same latitude being extended to the case of weakly gangs.

6. Sub-paragraph (iv) allows for a reduction being made from the task on account of distance on works where accommodation has not been provided. The scale laid down is an abatement of an hour's work for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or in other words a reduction of $\frac{1}{4}$ for every $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, taking the working day to be 8 hours from 7-30 A.M. to 2 noon, and 2 P.M. to 5-30 P.M.

7. From paragraph 4 of the Government Order it is clear that Government does not wish fines to be imposed for short work. It should only be resorted to in clear cases of malingering or insubordination; and as no entire gang can hardly be said to be in a body lazy or insubordinate, the fining of entire gangs is practically abolished. The names of the lazy and contumacious characters, however, should be noted down by the Overseer, with a view to imposing individual fines, and that not beyond the extent to which the gang would otherwise be fined for short work, for the Code contemplates fining only for short work (*vide* section 28, Appendix VI).

The undersigned has strictly ordered the paymasters to take no notice of any orders to impose fines on gangs. They have, however, been instructed to impose fines on individuals only in such cases where the Overseer has entered in the remarks column that such individual has been found to be malingering or insubordinate.

Such fines imposed on contumacious or lazy characters should not allow of their wages being reduced below D class, nor should it continue for more than a week continuously without the sanction of the undersigned previously obtained in writing.

8. Overseers will see from the spirit of the Government Order now issued that it has the effect of cancelling the circular issued to them by the late Executive Engineer to the effect that Revenue officers have no concern with scrutinising tasks, mustering gangs, check measuring work, &c., for the Government Order gives full control of the works to the Revenue Divisional Officers.

9. Overseers are strictly ordered to carry out these instructions to the very letter, and failure to do so will be reported to the Collector, with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of Government.

CAMP, ALLAGADDA,
Dated 11th May 1897.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

NOTE.—Since the issue of this circular G.O., No. 284-Press, dated 1st May 1897, ordering that nursing mothers and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy should be treated as equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ units has been received, and Overseers should carry out the above order at once.

(Signed) GHOSE,
Ag. Head Assistant Collector.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), No. 596, dated 23th August 1897 :—

W. J. H. LEFANU, Esq.
(Famine Commissioner.)

Read—the following G.O., Mis. No. 3713, Revenue, dated 19th July 1897 :—

Read—the following note by the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, No. 739D., dated 7th July 1897 :—

As head of the Public Works Department and a servant of Government, I think it my duty to acquaint the Government with my views as to the effect of the proposed order, as I feel convinced that it will make matters far worse than at present.

2. With reference to the remarks of the Honourable Mr. Grose to the effect that I am not aware of the difference between ordinary works carried out by ordinary coolies and relief works, I beg to submit that I am quite well aware of the difference as, during my service, I have had considerable experience both of ordinary works and relief works; and I am still of opinion that a Public Works officer knows more of the ordinary task to be demanded from an ordinary cooly than a Collector does and that, consequently, he is in a better position to suit the task according to the condition of the famine cooly; there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that a Public Works officer has less common sense than a Collector, or that he is more hard-hearted and unsympathetic. The other extreme of being too weak and soft-hearted is likely to lead to serious consequences, as it demoralises the people and causes needless waste of money, and there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department. It seems to me a most extraordinary notion that because the Public Works Department has been accustomed to deal with ordinary coolies on ordinary works, that it should not be considered capable of dealing with coolies on relief works. It might as well be said that a Revenue Officer, who had been in the habit of collecting the revenues of a district for years, is not fit to do so during seasons of failure of crops, as he would be too hard-hearted and unsympathetic, and therefore during these seasons the work should be done by the Salt, or Police, or some other department.

3. I think I was quite justified in saying that the famine works had been wrongly managed from the beginning by the fact that the Government is now trying

to alter the system hitherto in force, and have a few large works on which coolies could be massed, instead of a vast number of scattered small works. In my tour report I have shown that, if the famine becomes widespread and the relief works are managed as hitherto, more than 1,600 upper subordinates will be required, and surely a system that necessitates such an immense amount of supervision cannot be called correct.

4. By the proposed order, the Collector and the Divisional Officers can issue orders direct to the subordinates in charge of relief works apparently on all subjects, while the Executive Engineer is debarred from giving orders to his own subordinates, except on strictly professional matters (which have not been clearly defined). By this order, the Executive Engineer is reduced to a nonentity, and it becomes absolutely impossible for him to maintain discipline on the works: moreover, the subordinate has to serve two masters. He may receive one order from the Collector, which may clash with one given by the Executive Engineer, even though the former order may be on a non-professional subject, and the result may be that he is fined by both officers. I think it will be far better, if this order is to hold good, that the Executive Engineer should have nothing to do with the work, and the Collector took entire management with the help of subordinates lent by this department; the latter would then not have to serve two masters. I feel perfectly convinced that the present friction which is so much to be regretted will be immensely increased by the proposed order; the clause regarding needless interference will, I am afraid, have little effect on the native Revenue officials or even with others who are zealous. I feel sure there is not an officer in the department, who would object to the Collector visiting a work and discussing and arranging matters with him; but when Deputy Collectors, Deputy Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and others give orders regarding works in charge of an Executive Engineer, it is most galling to the latter, and it is still worse when a Collector acts on complaints made by his subordinates, who are only too glad to try and show their zeal by finding fault with the work of another department. It may be stated as a general rule that the Revenue officials are far younger and junior in on the part of the former more distasteful. My remarks are actuated entirely by a sense of the responsibility I owe to Government in my capacity as head of the Public Works Department, and I trust therefore they may have as much consideration given to them as to those of the Board of Revenue, in accordance with whose views the order seems to have been drafted. I have done all I can and the results of the proposed system must be awaited: what they will be, I hardly like to contemplate. I think it advisable that I should explain what I consider would be the best manner of carrying out relief works. The Bombay Code contemplates the division of relief works into large and small—the former being in charge of a Public Works officer assisted by a Civil officer if possible; the latter to be in charge of the Collector—and my proposals, which are as follows, are almost similar:—

1st—Large works should be concentrated as far as possible, not more than about twelve works being carried on in each district.

2nd—The distressed persons should be made to resort to these works, the arrangement for their conveyance and keep while travelling being entirely under the Revenue Department.

3rd—These large works should be entirely under the Public Works Department, assisted, if necessary, by a civil officer, who should be under the orders of the Executive Engineer in charge of the work, who, however, would not have the power of punishing or censuring him, except through the Collector.

4th—All small works started for the purpose of village relief should be under the Collector, subordinates, if necessary, being lent by the Public Works Department: these latter would be entirely under the orders of the Revenue Department.

5th—These small works should be restricted to deepening village tanks, repairing village roads, clearing prickly-pear, forest works and minor irrigation works.

5. By this arrangement I firmly believe that everything would work smoothly and be carried on much better than at present. The Revenue Department have now quite

as much as, if not more than, it can do satisfactorily. The distribution of gratuitous relief is alone a duty that requires the most careful supervision, and if the Revenue Department look properly after that and also after kitchens, poor-houses, execution of small works and the many other duties connected with famine relief, it is as much as they can do satisfactorily, and interference with the work of the Public Works Department only adds to their work, does no good and causes endless friction and dissatisfaction.

6. I would call attention to the orders issued for the guidance of officers employed on relief works in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, issued with G.O., No. 14, Revenue, dated 9th January 1897, from which it will be seen that the Collector has not much control over relief works, which seem to be left almost entirely to the Public Works Department.

Order thereon—Mis. No. 3713, dated 19th July 1897.

Forwarded to the Famine Commissioner for very early remarks with reference to G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.

Resolution—No. 596, dated 28th August 1897.

The question underlying the present reference is in no sense a new one. The matter was thrashed out in the reports on the famine of 1877–78, and the policy, to which the Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government objects, was formulated by the Commission specially selected to report on the lessons taught by that famine, and adopted in full by Government.

2. The position of the officers of the Public Works Department in the earlier stages of that famine was, according to their views, even less acceptable than it is now. Under G.O., No. 631, dated 15th February 1877, all works—two only excepted—were to be considered as being carried out by the Revenue Department, the Public Works Department giving advice and help. In that G.O., it was further observed that “their (Public Works Department) subordinates can probably be best employed in supervising the execution of relief works, and, when this is the case, they should be considered as under the orders of the Collector or Divisional Officer.”

3. The Public Works Department is the only department of Government which is permitted to say *non possumus*, which is often equivalent to *non volumus*. The cohesiveness and *esprit de corps* of the Royal Engineers are well known. The Civil Engineers have not only professional traditions to bind them together, but, hailing from one centre—the Engineering Eton—and mostly members, or associates, of the Institute of Civil Engineers, they have strong common sentiments, and are saturated with an impatience of laical interference, which leads them occasionally to treat orders with contempt. Referring to the G.O., above quoted, the Madras Government, in its review of the Madras famine, observed that the order in question “remained practically a dead letter, because, although communicated to the Public Works Department, no action was taken on it in that department till the month of April, and it was then simply recorded and communicated to District Engineers later on, who, however, for the most part, did not consider that they were to act on it.”

4. As now, so in 1877–78, there was considerable friction between the Public Works and Revenue Departments. This is mentioned in many places in the “Replies to questions circulated by the Famine Commission,” and, after referring to the

want of harmony which prevailed, one Collector—volume II, page 508—very happily summed up by observing that the Engineers, as a rule, looked upon their department as entirely a separate one and not part of the district machinery, of which the Collector should be the sole controlling power, adding that “there was too much tendency in this department to the *imperium in imperio*.” This is really the sentiment which is at the bottom of the present difficulty, which need not be called an *impasse*, for it needs only one word from Government to cause all officers of the department to accept the position, assigned to them in famine matters, loyally.

5. Sir W. Robinson, colleague of the Duke of Buckingham during the famine, wrote strongly on the matter—Vol. I *ibid*, page 54—as follows :—

“Works should, as far as possible, be organized under Department of Public Works Officers, but that department should be under the direct control of the Civil Administration of the district. Nothing could have been more embarrassing, more detrimental to public interests, and the real object of providing life-saving labour than the want of rapport which, more or less, prevailed in many, if not most, of the famine districts of this Presidency during the early months of our famine, and more or less throughout, as between the district administration and executives of works. This weakness of rapport was perhaps inherent in the organization, and will not, I fear, be lessened by the recent changes made. I was a member of the Department of Public Works Commission which sat in 1869–70, as respects the organization of the Department of Public Works as we found that it then worked—and again, more recently, I have had to record my views on this important matter. To the former report I must refer for my general judgment, and I submit my more matured reflections noted in two recent minutes on Department of Public Works organization. The more the executive is localized and made part and parcel of the district administration, and placed in rapport with local officers and District Boards, the less will be the friction in times of trouble. The present organization fails seriously in this respect, but *Department of Public Works Officers shun what they deem subordination to local authority and interest.*”

6. The scientific officers often find great difficulty in accommodating themselves to the altered circumstances of Famine Administration, and, in straining at producing work which will bring them professional credit, and at impossible discipline and outturn, forget the prime object for which that work is taken in hand. In their recommendations contained in paragraph 129, the Famine Commission observed that “it is to be clearly understood by these officers that their duty is not, as in ordinary times, to get the greatest quantity of work done at the cheapest rate, but to give effectual relief to the labouring population, inasmuch as the work is undertaken, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the people employed on it”, and their deliberate conclusion is embodied in paragraph 130 of the same :—

“The Collector of the district should exercise general supervision over all works, as over all other arrangements for giving relief, within his district, and should be responsible to Government for their efficiency. Pending reference to the Government or other superior authority, his decision should be accepted by the Public Works Officers, in all matters relating to the task and wage of the people employed, as well as in opening or closing works, and generally in every thing, except arrangements of a merely technical nature.”

The reference under reply would probably not have been made, had it been remembered that the President of the Commission which made these recommendations was an officer of the Royal Engineers, General Sir R. Strachey.

7. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, observes in the memorandum now under consideration, that “he has done all he can, and the results of the proposed system must be awaited. What they will be he hardly likes to contemplate.” It would almost seem that the Chief Engineer’s interpretation of “doing all that he can” takes the form of setting an example to his department of challenging the order of Government before the ink is dry upon the paper, and that the *mot d’ordre* amongst his officers will be to follow suit. A serious word from Colonel McNeil Campbell would put an end to all the friction which exists.

8. The Famine Commissioner entirely repudiates any intention to treat either Colonel McNeil Campbell’s representations, or the *amour propre* of the department over which he presides, with anything but the most sincere respect. Firstly, he is aware that, at least on one occasion, the Chief Engineer has used his influence in the interests of peace. It is quite conceivable, and even natural, that a body of gentlemen of high scientific training, and accustomed ordinarily to interference from

officers of their own profession only, should find a certain difficulty in accommodating themselves to temporarily altered circumstances. If, however, they would grasp, and their senior officers insist on their grasping, the situation, these clouds would clear away. After all, it is a very small minority who have caused friction, the majority of the Public Works Officers on famine duty having loyally and cordially worked with Collectors. There has been no trouble in Cuddapah, where the Executive Engineer, one small explosion excepted, and his two chief Assistants, one of them a Royal Engineer, have loyally set aside professional prejudice, and worked side by side with the Collector, without friction. Two successive Executive Engineers, and an Assistant, a Royal Engineer, have done the same in Anantapur. The present Executive Engineer, in Kurnool, has, after certain preliminary misunderstandings, for which he can hardly be held responsible, found no difficulty in doing all that the Collector wants. The Executive Engineer—up to a certain date—and his Assistant, in Ganjam, have co-operated well with the Collector. The work of the Executive Engineer in charge of relief, during the preliminary stages of distress, in communication with the then Collector of Bellary, left nothing to be desired in the matter of cordiality. The only officers who have been really difficile have been Superintending Engineers in charge of the 1st and 3rd Divisions, the Executive Engineer in charge during the first months of distress in Kurnool, and the present Executive Engineer in Vizagapatam. The relations between the Collector of Bellary and the Executive Engineer have not been as cordial as could be desired. It will be seen, therefore, that the great majority of the scientific officers have found it possible to work on the lines of the Code.

9. As for the officers who have failed to do so, the Famine Commissioner will not say that their object has been to prove the position accorded to them by the Code to be impossible; but, had this been their object, they could not have worked better towards that end. When the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Division, is not railing at kitchen mismanagement, his diatribes are generally directed to the insufficiency of tasks and failure to enforce the same. It must be known to the Superintending Engineer that all the district task schedules were framed, no doubt with the approval of the Collectors concerned, by officers of his own department, and that even G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, left his subordinates ample power to enforce tasks. It is doubtful if, during the several successive days in which the delegate of the Government of India was the recipient of the Superintending Engineer’s confidences, sufficient, or any, prominence was given to these points. These schedule tasks, except where the Superintending Engineer, without authority, enhanced them, and where a young Assistant Engineer took upon himself to enhance the Superintending Engineer’s enhancements, have been generally in force all through the hot weather, and, if there has been any failure to enforce them, the subordinates of the Public Works Department are primarily responsible for the omission. If the position assigned to the Public Works Department by the report of the Famine Commission, 1878, and by the Famine Code, had been duly maintained, all these matters would have been settled between the Executive Engineer of the district and the Collector. The Executive Engineer, Ganjam, has recently been remarking on the subject of tasks, &c. So has his Assistant. The Assistant Engineer’s remarks go first to the Executive Engineer; then to the Superintending Engineer; then to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department; then to the Revenue Secretary; then to the Famine Commissioner, then to the Collector of Ganjam, and possibly might work the whole way round to the Assistant Engineer again. This is intolerable circumlocution. One of the first principles of Famine Administration, and an indispensable condition precedent to its success, is that *the district should be the unit of administration*, and that all questions should be settled in the district. It would be perfectly impossible for Government to go into such matters, even if the *personnel* of Government were quadrupled. Hypothesising that the position, contended for by the Public Works Department, were conceded, what would be the result? Wherever the Collector ventured to challenge the action even of an overseer, he would have to write to the Famine Commissioner, and he to the Revenue Secretary to Government, when the matter would probably be referred to the Chief Engineer, and the answer would have to filter down through the same channels. There would be this further drawback that, whereas the Engineer is always

tolerably certain of support from the head of his department, the Revenue officer is never certain how he may be supported, and, after one or two failures, would simply drop the matter in despair. Any one who had experience of the great famine can call up instances of the kind. For example, during 1877-78, in Salem, two Royal Engineers were simply impracticable, and it is to them specially that the Collector of Salem referred, when speaking of the want of harmony which characterised operations in his district (Famine Commission, 1878, Volume II, Chapter III, page 508). The complaint was a common one, and the want of control by the Revenue Department was found to be so fatal to efficiency, that the present position was defined in the Code in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

10. It was this recognition of the essential principle, that disputed questions should be settled in the district, which led to the elimination, in all matters not strictly technical, of the Superintending Engineer from the purview of the Madras Famine Code. The Bombay Code *does* assign him, or the Chief Engineer—as he is there termed—a place, but it is a place in the district—section 37, Bombay Code—and that Code does not contemplate that Government should be troubled with petty correspondence or complaints, for it provides—section 38—that, when the Collector and Executive Engineer differ, the matter is to be referred for disposal, *through* the Chief (i.e., Superintending) Engineer to the Famine Commissioner; differences between subordinate officers of the two departments are to be referred, *through* the Executive Engineer to the Collector. When the Executive Engineer “sees any shortcomings, or any reason for alarm, he is to report them to the Collector” direct, “even though they may not lie within his official sphere”—section 39 (b)—but he is *not* to report them, through a round-about channel, to Government. The Bombay Code also provides that all executive officers of the Public Works Department employed on relief works shall be subordinates, in all matters not strictly professional, to the Collector,—section 38 (a)—and similarly, officers of the Public Works Department below the rank of Assistant Engineer are subordinates to the Divisional Officer, section 38 (b). Section 36 of the Bombay Code enunciates the principles referred to in paragraph 6 *supra*, being founded on the report of the Famine Commission, and winds up with a most important recommendation, which, if acted on, would have rendered the present reference unnecessary: “It is essential that hearty and friendly co-operation should exist between the Land Revenue and Public Works staffs.” The Famine Commissioner has, on several occasions, refrained from bringing cases of serious friction to the notice of Government, and trusts that his reticence may not be imputed to him for a fault. Had he not done so, Government would have been in a better position to judge of the extent to which the Public Works Department officers arrogate independence, and of the urgent necessity for speaking out, once and for all, on the subject. Had the scientific corps devoted, to the working of the Code position, the same energy which they have given to proving it to be impossible; had they co-operated with the Collector, instead of shooting at him round the corner, every shortcoming, if any, of which they complain would have been promptly remedied.

11. In paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's note, he seems to beg the question when he affirms that “there is no department more capable of striking the correct mean than the Public Works Department,” in the matter of tasking. There is nothing esoteric about tasking. It is a matter which any man may master with a very little trouble. The Famine Commissioner is not sure that the Chief Engineer is not mixing up the question of *rates*, in which the Public Works Department have special experience, with that of *tasks*, of which, in ordinary times, they have no experience at all. Rates ought to be founded on tasks, but it is very doubtful if they ever, in practice, are. The Railway has its rates, so has the Public Works Department, so has the Local Fund Department, all differing. Lastly come the rates, best of all, at which, in simple work, an intelligent ryot can get work done, superintending the labour himself. That the officers of the Public Works Department come to famine work with very minute information on the subject of tasks is very doubtful, as the best of them have to work out these tasks for themselves, and, in fact, no Code of tasks can suit varying circumstances, and differently constituted gangs. The Famine

Commissioner has found it necessary recently to take objection to tasks fixed by the Superintending Engineer himself (Proceedings of Famine Commissioner, No. 555, dated 7th August 1897, and No. 558, dated 10th August 1897).

He was very much struck with the zeal shown in this matter by the Executive Engineer, Anantapur, who took the extreme step of performing part of a task, both in stone-breaking and in excavation, with his own hands, though this was only what any other officer could do himself. The Famine Commissioner pointed out, however, to the Executive Engineer that he could not safely argue from the performance of part of a day's work as to what could be done in the whole day, for the fresh workman will always do more than a man tired at the close of a day's work. In fact, to make certain, it would be necessary to do a whole day's work, which it would be too much to expect of any Executive Engineer. The safest way is to watch an average gang, working honestly for a whole day, and this any one can do. The Chief Engineer states that the Revenue officials are, as a general rule, far younger and junior in service to those of the Public Works Department. The question of youth cuts both ways. A young Assistant Engineer, fresh from the Engineering College, took upon himself, without reference to the Collector, to enhance a task which the Superintending Engineer, also without reference to the Collector, had already enhanced. According to the Chief Engineer, the Collector should have no power to rectify such an interference.

12. If Government are not to be overwhelmed with continual references, and engaged in deciding continual quarrels (they have had one such undisposed of for nearly three months—Board's Proceedings, Mis., No. 4186, dated 10th June 1897), it is necessary that some one person must be recognised as paramount in district administration. That person can only be the Collector. He may be old, or he may be young, but the average Collector is an officer with whom, and, in non-professional matters, under whom, no officer of another department could reasonably object to work. The Police Superintendents, often Colonels, never objected to this, and, in famine matters, officers of rank, as Major C. D. Baynes, and others, worked loyally, in every sense, under Collectors. The other Scientific Department—the Medical—has never objected to work with, or under, the Collector. There is no reason why the Public Works Officers should do so. The recalcitrants are only a very few, and one earnest word would put an end to all obstructions.

13. Paragraph 3 of the Chief Engineer's note may be disposed of very briefly. He knows well that there are no large works available for the employment of famine labour in any of the affected districts; and that, as regards the Deccan, it would be very difficult, though not impossible, to find any. That some are not forthcoming is due to the fact that, year after year, the Public Works Department has never taken its due share in the framing of famine works programmes, partly on the *non possumus* ground, and partly owing to the rule that no work should be examined, and estimated for, which is not likely to be carried out within four years. It is most urgent that the Public Works Department should thoroughly examine the Famine zone and determine what irrigation works are possible, and this enquiry should not be conducted solely from the standpoint of whether such works will pay interest on their cost or not. Whenever famine comes there must be waste, and especially in the Deccan. That waste would just cover, or more than cover, the difference of cost between the estimate of a work which will pay interest on capital expenditure and one which will not. At the end of the famine, there would be a useful work to show, and a certain area would be permanently safe-guarded—a happy contrast to miles of broken metal.

14. The position taken up in paragraph 4 is one which cannot be accepted. There is nothing to prevent the Engineer from issuing orders direct to his subordinates in all professional matters, and, in the non-professional matters, with the Collector's consent. As the Executive Engineer cannot be everywhere, it is urgent that some one should have the power of correcting, on the spot, whatever is wrong, and this power may safely be given to the Collector and his Divisional Officers. For famine purposes, the Executive Engineer becomes the Collector's Famine Assistant; so far

from being a "nonentity," he is the Collector's *alter ego* for the organisation and working of famine labour. As such, he can readily bring to the Collector's notice anything which he finds wrong in non-professional matters. This he ought to do, instead of writing reports to his departmental superiors and the Chief Engineer. If the proper relation between the Collector and the Executive Engineer were insisted on, all these differences of opinion would be discussed, and settled locally, to the great advantage of administration. The Chief Engineer has consistently encouraged the reverse action by accepting, and passing on to Government, petty complaints which the local officers should have made to the Collector, not to him, thereby discouraging the very *entente cordiale* which it should be his first object to foster. The Famine Commissioner does not anticipate any undue interference on the part of native Revenue officials. They would have little room for interference, once the Executive Engineer gets into his proper position, as assigned to him by Government and the Famine Code. As to interference by Deputy Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors, &c., the Chief Engineer does not seem to have grasped the purport of the order against which he protests. The power of interference is limited to the Collector and Divisional Officers. The Famine Commissioner is not aware of any instance of such interference. It must be observed that the Code contemplates the appointment of Civil officers to large works, and such officers are so employed in Bombay on petty salaries. The Famine Commissioner deprecated their appointment here, for the very reason that, as said by Colonel McNeil Campbell, interference from such persons would be exceedingly "galling" to the Engineers. This officer, however, whatever his pay, could not, any more than a paymaster, be placed under the orders of the Executive Engineer. They are intended as a check, and they could not be a check to their own superior. The Famine Commissioner has purposely refrained from recommending their employment from dread of additional friction, as much as because, except on the largest works, they would rarely be of use.

15. As to the proposals in paragraph 4 (1), this is the distance test, condemned by the Famine Commission and by the Madras Government, pure and simple, and there are no such large works anywhere available. This disposes of paragraph 4 (2) and (3); paragraph 4 (4) and (5) is the intermediate system, which Collectors have been ordered to introduce, where possible.

16. As to paragraph 6, the Famine Commissioner most strongly deprecates any importation from the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, unless, indeed, the 50 lakhs of the Famine fund be imported along with it. The Madras Presidency has nothing to learn from any part of India, and one of the most striking things in the famine of 1877-78 was the astonishment and admiration expressed by Bengal officers for the advanced state of administration in Madras.

17. In communicating G.O., No. 593, dated 19th July 1897, to Collectors, the Famine Commissioner observed as follows:—

"The rules now laid down have been made for the public interest, and in the exceptional circumstances of famine administration. Exceptional tact and conciliation should be ever present in acting on them. As an order of Government, they will be accepted loyally by the officers of the Public Works Department, and Collectors will therefore find it conduce best to good relations to act, as far as possible, with, and through, the officers of that department, rather than independently. When, in 1877, an order of Government placed a Royal Engineer Officer—Sir Michael Kennedy—in control of Famine administration, the Revenue Department accepted the position loyally. In the present case, it is only in matters not strictly professional and technical that the Revenue Department can interfere."

The authority now given to the Collector, and the powers of interference permitted to him and his Divisional Officers are not likely to be abused. The mere fact that such power exists should be sufficient to attain the end desired, without the exercise of it. In fact, the Famine Commissioner would require that the case should be a very strong one indeed to satisfy him that any Collector had been justified in using the power given to him. Tact is what is most wanted, and tact is the velvet glove which covers strength.

18. There has been some delay in replying to the Government Order, as reference was necessary to bulky volumes which could not well be sent to camp.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

ORDER—No. 899, Revenue, dated 29th October 1897.

Miscellaneous.

The Government is of opinion that the importance of the questions dealt with in the above papers requires that they and other important questions should be thoroughly discussed by officers who have had practical experience of the working of the Famine Code during the distress which is now coming to a close; and directs that a conference of Revenue, Public Works and Medical officers be held for the purpose under the Presidency of the Famine Commissioner at Bellary in the case of the Deccan districts and at Waltair in the case of the Northern districts. The Famine Commissioner is requested to arrange for the holding of these conferences and to inform Government of the arrangements he may make.

2. The attention of the Famine Commissioner is invited to paragraph 4 of the letter communicated with G.O., No. 841, dated 5th October 1897, in which the Government of India desires that proposals for amending or supplementing the Famine Code should not be incorporated in the final Famine report but should be submitted separately. The historical part of the report should be got ready and submitted to Government before the close of the calendar year; the proposals of the Famine Commissioner for amending or supplementing the Code may be submitted later after the ending of the conferences.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
,, the Public Department.
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Local and Municipal Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

Encl. C. Parthasarathy.

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